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THE DUKE OF RICHMOND.

THE

# ST. JAMES' MAGAZINE.

VOL. V.

NEW SERIES.

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APRIL TO SEPTEMBER, 1870.

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ST. JAMES' MAGAZINE

VOL. 4

NEW SERIES

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## INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
Agricultural Education . . .	1	Clerical Celebrities :	
Author and Actress. An Un-		Mr. Martineau and Arch-	
symmetrical Novel. 17, 215, 366		deacon Denison . . .	315
465, 603, 765.		Clumsy Satire . . . . .	456
A Wish. (A Poem). . . . .	716	Competition Wallah Extraordi-	
Bad Made Worse. A Common-		nary, A. A Chinese Legend	343
place Story . . . . .	151, 300	Constance. (A Poem). . . . .	646
British Rabbi, The . . . . .	208	Cue from Froissart, A. . . . .	504
Brittany : the "Tregorrais"		Curious Concert, A. . . . .	713
and the "Fête of St. Loup"	580	Cyrus Redding. <i>In Memoriam</i>	444
Cabinet Photographs :		Dead and Alive Neighbour-	
The Duke of Richmond		hoods . . . . .	91
and Lord Westbury .	126	Dead and Alive Shops . . . . .	459
Mr. Forster and Mr. New-		Despair in a Churchyard. (A	
degate . . . . .	249	Poem) . . . . .	764
Sir Roundell Palmer and		Easy-chair Essays :—	
Lord Lytton. . . . .	423	No. II. Cherished Identity	638
Capuchin Convent, The . . . . .	449	Epigram. . . . .	7
Charity . . . . .	464	First Ecumenical Council, The	48
Charles Dickens . . . . .	696	Gems from Classic Mines :	
Childish Wish Versified, A . . .	700	No. I., 342 ; No. II., 543 ;	
Clerical Celebrities :		No. III., 682 ; No. IV., .	745
The Rev. W. H. Mackono-		Ghismonde the Fair. (A Poem).	829
chie and the Rev. Samuel		Going to the Bad . . . . .	289
Martin . . . . .	8	Griselda . . . . .	352
The Rev. H. P. Liddon		Inside Temple Bar . . . . .	797
and the Rev. Thomas			
Guthrie . . . . .	166		

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	PAGE		PAGE
In the Land of the Leek. . . . .	813	Prophet Indeed, A. . . . .	533
Invocation, An . . . . .	578	Reviews . . . . .	138, 281, 564
Irish Chronicle, An. . . . .	433	Sea Coast, A, and a shattered Vessel. (A Poem). . . . .	602
King James's Volunteers. . . . .	394	September . . . . .	709
Living Dust . . . . .	113	The Peerage and the Upper Ten Thousand . . . . .	571
Lumley Entail, The. (A Novel). 59, 260, 401, 545, 651, 717		The Price of Peace. . . . .	701
May in the Country . . . . .	145	The Voice of Nature to the Prodigal. (A Poem) . . . . .	794
Metaphysical Speculation. (A Poem) . . . . .	16	Toasts . . . . .	523
Midnight. (A Poem) . . . . .	400	Tradition . . . . .	809
No Appeal. (A Novel). 97, 177, 321		Two Days at Ravenna . . . . .	746
One-sided Education. A Jew- ish Sketch . . . . .	683	Witch's Sabbath, The . . . . .	500
Our Old Friend Gray . . . . .	515	Woman's, A, View of Authors and Matrimony . . . . .	535

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Rev. W. H. Mackonochie, 8.	Archdeacon Denison, 318.
Rev. Samuel Martin, 13.	Sir Roundell Palmer, 424.
Father and Son, 24.	Lord Lytton, 429.
The Duke of Richmond, 126.	A Sea Coast and a Shattered Ves- sel, 571.
Lord Westbury, 130.	Half Afraid, 650.
Rev. Thomas Guthrie, 172.	Charles Dickens, 696.
Mr. Forster, 249.	The Little Gleaners, 709.
Midnight, 289.	
Rev. J. Martineau, 315.	

THE

# ST. JAMES' MAGAZINE.

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## AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

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To begin a magazine article with a quotation from Boswell's Life of Johnson, is only a shade less laughable than to begin it with the favourite schoolboy of Lord Macaulay. Yet the anecdote to follow, trite as it is, bears so much upon the present subject, that perhaps our readers will excuse us if we suggest a paragraph to *Punch* :—

“‘Nay, sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people, even in the common intercourse of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it.’—‘And yet,’ said I, ‘people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning.’—Johnson: ‘Why, sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors.’ He then called the boy, ‘What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?’—‘Sir,’ said the boy, ‘I would give what I have.’ Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, ‘Sir,’ said he, ‘a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being, whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge.’”

Now this anecdote just raises the question, what is the end of the knowledge? Is it its own reward, or is it meant to serve ulterior purposes? Of course it may, and generally speaking does, act in both ways. But it is necessary to bear the distinction



in mind, and more particularly in relation to our present subject. For what we have to ask ourselves is this, at what point in the scale *does* knowledge begin to be its own reward? and can we hope to get the children of the poor, as a rule, ever to reach that point? Because, if not, all that they learn after reading, writing, and cyphering has been mastered, is just so much loss of time. In other words, is it worth while to keep the children of agricultural labourers away from agricultural work during the two or three precious years that intervene between childhood and youth, for the sake of what they can learn in that interval at the national school? We do not say it is not, and we do not say that it is. But we do say that the question has never fairly been considered; and that, in face of the popular cry, few people have the courage to propound so unpopular an interrogative.

The boy rowed Johnson perfectly well, though he knew nothing of the Argonauts. And our own boys will do their farm work well enough without knowing anything of the Crusades. If they could be really "cultivated," so that the knowledge they acquired really sank into their minds, and perceptibly affected their characters and intelligence, the case would be different. But the condition of labour forbids us to expect as much as that; and in the mean time we run some risk of excluding boys from one kind of education which is unquestionably beneficial to them, without giving them anything in its place that is really deserving of the name.

But, waiving this point for the present, and assuming that the education of which children are deprived by too early a dedication to labour is as valuable as its warmest votaries believe, it remains to be seen to what extent legislative interference is either necessary or expedient. Mr. Tremenhoe and Mr. Tufnell, the two Chief Commissioners, both express very strong opinions upon this matter; and, while recognising the propriety of legislation, warn us against violating the laws of political economy, and placing serious restrictions on the right of parents to the produce of their children's industry. Everybody will admit that it is the duty of the State to take care that ignorance to which crime or immorality is directly traceable, should not be perpetuated from generation to generation. But all degrees of education over and above what is sufficient to ensure this primary object, lie, in our opinion, beyond the sphere of Government. For where are we to draw the line? It would, of course, be for the good of society, in one sense, that all its members were even highly educated persons: that it should be impossible to have a Mr. Ayrton as First Commissioner of Works. But we make no attempt to secure any such result as this by the action of authority. The

children of the agricultural labourer are only *mutatis mutandis*, in the same position as many other children who are unable to "complete their education." The problem which they present to us is fundamentally the same as that with which we are confronted in every department of life—how, namely, to reconcile the claims of practical work with the development of the intellectual faculties; in other words, the necessity for technical education with the conditions of general education. As far as the English peasant is concerned, the shape it assumes is this. By sending his boys to farm-work, instead of sending them to school, he at one and the same time increases his own income, and secures for his children that technical training which is, in his own opinion, necessary to their future welfare. In trade, in commerce, in law, in the scientific professions, we see the views of parents and guardians governed by the same principle. It is idle to find fault with the labourer because he acts upon it too. But several further questions are suggested by this aspect of the case before we can approximate to a conclusion. Is the view itself a sound one? Is it universally, or only partially, sound? Would any possible rise in wages enable the labouring man to disregard it?

It must be admitted that the motive which, in middle-class families, prompts the withdrawal of a son from school at an early age, in order that he may be put to work at once in his father's office, is not always founded on a conviction that unless he begins young he will never understand his business. The feeling rather is, that unless he begins young, he will never really like his business. We have heard men of liberal sentiments, and large experience, assert this repeatedly. Young men from the universities, they will tell you, are generally useless in the city. Whether this be true, or not, we do not pretend to determine. For our own parts, we should doubt it. Still, such is the feeling that prevails very widely among respectable solicitors and merchants; and it is very different from the reasons which are assigned for putting children to farm-work very young. Farmers declare that there is much in agricultural labour which is never thoroughly mastered but by those who begin it very young. The management of horses, for instance, is one thing which they mention. And we must recollect, too, that an intelligent boy is being educated, in a way, all the time he is at work. He learns

"———Ventos et varium cœli prædiscere morem,  
Et quid quæque ferat regio, et quid quæque recusat."

It is by exercising his powers of observation on these, and kindred subjects that he rises to the top of his profession, and is revered, like old Kester Bale in Adam Bede, who "knew the

natur of all farming work" better than any man in the three parishes. It is men of this stamp who do well on little farms of their own, if they are ever lucky enough to get them. And it is questionable what equivalent a boy would get for this untaught wisdom by being kept at school till he was twelve. The mind is more open to receive deep and lasting impressions from outward things in early childhood than during the years which immediately succeed it. And we are disposed, therefore, to believe that there is something in the farmer's view. At the same time, there are the arguments to be adduced on the other side. It is urged that if children go to farm-work very young, they are liable to physical injury, which will do more to damage their prospects than physical training to advance them: that purely technical training must be accompanied by some of that general intelligence which a certain degree of schooling is required to develope, and that this is especially true in these days, when agriculture is becoming a highly scientific industry, and machinery, demanding skilled labour, is being introduced into almost every operation. At the same time, we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by either of these arguments. There is abundant evidence to show that the physical injury which young children are said to sustain has been greatly exaggerated; while it seems probable that much of the machine work which the labourers now have to conduct is as purely mechanical as anything else upon a farm, and often, indeed, requires less intelligence and less knowledge than the old methods of agriculture.

We have next to consider the effect upon this which any rise of wages within the bounds of probability might be expected to exercise. Those who think with Mr. Tremenhare, that the average labourer, in steady work—the "wet and dry" man, as he is called—is able even now to dispense with the earnings of his children, and to pay for their instruction at school, may see nothing improbable in the supposition that before long all may be in that position. No doubt there are some favoured districts, where prosperity of this kind is the rule. But we should fear they are few in number. All, however, depends on the view we take of what should be his style of living. If we think he is at this moment as well fed, clothed, and lodged as he ought to be, then no doubt any surplus income coming to him from a rise in wages, ought to go to the education of his children. But it has frequently struck the writer of this article that until that level is reached, we should be wrong to require him to do more than he does at present. Suppose his children's earnings are just what make the difference between living in a decent cottage, and herding with his family in a pigstye, could we tell him he ought



to elect squalour with schooling, to decency and comfort without ? This question may be asked in a hundred different forms, and we must say we can see only one answer to it.

It is still a most difficult point, though the evidence is strongly in the affirmative, whether there is any age under which children should be restrained from going to work, and in consequence compelled to go to school. In a most able and comprehensive report, Mr. Tremenheere decides in the negative. He contends that there is no age at which children who can work at all cannot earn enough to make their labour valuable to their parents; and he adds, too, that liberty to employ their children in remunerative labour is the only condition on which we can give them compulsory education. You cannot inflict a penalty for non-attendance at school, while you are forbidding the child to earn anything for himself. There is great weight in this consideration, we admit. But Mr. Tremenheere is the only one of the Commissioners who takes the same view. They all think that children under ten should be excluded from work, and seem to take it for granted that they would in that case be allowed to go to school. On this head we confess we are sceptical.

It may be said, of course, that we are raising an imaginary difficulty, for that if it were a mere question between idling about the village and going to school, all parents would send their children to school. But these would not be the alternatives. There are many ways in which a child of nine years old in a country village can earn a few pence besides regular farm work. By running errands, by opening gates, by mushrooming, by acorning, by stick-picking, to say nothing of more questionable pursuits, to which, under the circumstances supposed, the temptation would be unusually strong. A sharp boy of that age can earn some considerable addition to the family fund. Apples, gooseberries, and plums, still grow in unprotected situations; hens still lay their eggs where the prowling urchin has a much better chance of getting hold of them than the rightful owner; the pig-tub and the wood-house are always at hand to stimulate his youthful energies.

For the continued education of boys after they have once been hired three plans have been suggested, namely, half-days, alternate whole days, or a certain amount of attendance during the six months preceding their hiring; the last, of course, taking for granted that boys are only required continuously six months out of the twelve. It will probably turn out that each of these methods will have its own particular fitness for particular localities. Where the boys live a long way from their work the first plan is impracticable. Where the population is thin, and every pair of hands is wanted

at particular seasons, both the first and second are impracticable. Where the work of children is wanted through the whole year the last is impracticable. But if there be no district which combines all these adverse circumstances in itself, there is none, we should hope, that may not avail itself of one or the other of the plans proposed. We ourselves should be inclined to think that the third-mentioned plan would be found the most generally useful, though it must be made to work with great elasticity. Mr. Henley suggests eighty-eight attendances during the six preceding months, as what might safely be exacted. But one of the clergy in his district thought that even an every-day attendance was not too much to require. The season of the year in which boys are most in request varies in different places; but it seems to be generally admitted that everywhere there is some season in which boys up to twelve or thirteen could continue to get a little schooling after they had begun work. Night schools are admitted to be very useful supplements; but they are not so well fitted for children as for adults, the former being too tired and sleepy after their day's work to profit by them.

It does not appear to us that the plan proposed by Mr. Forster for enforcing the attendance of children at his new districts is at all happily conceived. Granting some mode of compulsion to be necessary, it is not that. It is not our purpose to go into the details of the Government measure, but this particular provision is interwoven with our whole subject, and must be briefly noticed. Every local school board hereafter to be framed will be entrusted with a discretionary power of enforcing the attendance of children within their district at the rate-supported school of that district; and the mode of coercion is to be a fine of five shillings inflicted on the parents of absentees. This plan, on the whole, is so thoroughly bad, that it is difficult to know which of its flaws to single out first. The discrimination required from the board in order to pick out who may and who may not be properly absolved from this penalty, throws on them a most difficult and odious task. In the second place, did they decide every case with the wisdom of Solomon and the justice of Aristides, they could never escape charges of favouritism; and the growth in consequence of innumerable jealous and vindictive feelings among the peasantry under them. Villager would be jealous of villager, and district of district. And, finally, we must recollect that the families who transgressed most would be precisely those who could afford to pay the fine least. That is to say, those who send their children to work instead of to school would be the poorest people in the district. And with what heart could any board of governors inflict a fine of five shillings on a

half-starved labourer because he sends Johnny to earn a few pence instead of spending them ? It could not be done.

Other alternatives have been proposed. One is to make the farmer responsible, and to fine *him* if he employ children under a stated age. But then, as we have seen, the weak point of this is, that though it may keep the children from work, it would not, as a matter of course, make them go to school. Another is to drop all limitation upon age, and to make a certain amount of schooling a condition of being able to obtain school labour. Mr. Tremenheere has an elaborate scheme for carrying out this principle, which is too technical to interest our readers if given in full, but of which the spirit is this—that children shall be eligible for farmer's work in proportion to their efficiency as tested by the Revised Code. A child should be compelled to fulfil so many attendances, and come up to a certain standard. But it should be in the power of any child to shorten this period of probation by acquitting itself of the required task within a less period. Here would be a direct premium on intelligence and industry ; nor would the poor man's income be much diminished by it, since by a complicated adjustment of the half-time system each child would be able to do a good spell of work while keeping up its school attendances. Proficiency in school would ensure his complete emancipation at any time ; and at no time would he be excluded from partial employment in the fields.

It seems to us that in any final scheme of education the different requirements of town and country must be taken into account more than they have been, and that any one in which they are not, is likely to be a practical failure.

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### EPIGRAM.

CAN you imagine light which lends  
 Beyond itself no light,—  
 Whose radiance to its centre tends,  
 Whose surface is not bright ?  
 'Twould be a miracle—but still  
 Selfishness is that miracle.



## CLERICAL CELEBRITIES.

A SERIES OF ECCLESIASTICAL PORTRAITS.

## VII.—THE REV. W. H. MACKONCHIE AND THE REV. SAMUEL MARTIN.

THE church of St. Alban's, Holborn, has so long been one of the show places of London, that it can hardly need to be described to the reader. There are few persons in the metropolis who take an interest in ecclesiastical matters who have not at one time or another visited this too famous edifice, whilst there are not many people anywhere who have not read descriptions of the peculiar service which is conducted within its walls. Nevertheless, it is well to say something of this great centre of Ritualistic activity; and we are the more anxious to speak concerning it because, with the smallest possible amount of sympathy for the peculiar views of those who are responsible for the distinguishing peculiarities of St. Alban's, we yet entertain a very lively respect for the zeal and devotion which they have shown in the conduct of good works in the district in which that church is situated.

Those who wish to visit St. Alban's, and who after due enquiry have reached the eastern end of Holborn, and find themselves in that narrow and dirty street at the end of which the church stands, can hardly fail to arrive at the conclusion that there are not many districts of London in which a church is more needed than in this. St. Alban's stands in the heart of that dismal locality long consecrated to the crime and poverty of London, which is equally associated with the memory of Thomas Chatterton, the boy-suicide, and Fagan, the Jew fence and receiver. In that dismal region lying east and west of Hatton Garden, where so much of the want and sin and misery of this city of want and sin and misery are consecrated, the St. Alban's Mission carries on its good work. Here the sick are visited, the dying comforted, the suffering relieved, the starving fed. Here is a nursery where the poor may leave their children whilst they attend to their own day's work; here are schools where these same children, when they reach a more mature age, may be instructed; here are libraries, sick funds, reading-rooms, clothing clubs, and all the other agencies which modern benevolence has brought into play for the purpose of re-



REV. W. H. MACKONCHIE.



lieving the needs of the poor amongst us, and the centre round which all these agencies cluster is the church so well known as St. Alban's, Holborn.

The Sunday visitor, anxious to see to what extent Ritualism, in its most fully developed form, is capable of going, who wends his way towards St. Alban's, after passing through the region of squalor and filth at which we have hinted, finds himself in the immediate neighbourhood of a building having much more of the appearance of a monastery than of a church. After passing through a gateway, and along a dismal corridor, however, he finds himself suddenly at the entrance to one of the largest of all our London churches. Entering the building, his first impression will be that he is in a Roman Catholic place of worship. The style of architecture, to begin with, the rough and bare brick walls, the peculiar arrangement of the seats, and the separation of the sexes, will all tend to impress this opinion upon him. The appearance and demeanour of the congregation will strengthen the impression. We may regret the fact, but we nevertheless cannot deny that the bearing and demeanour of an ordinary Protestant congregation in this country is not such as to impress very deeply those who have an opportunity of witnessing it. We have not yet reached that happy stage of indifference at which our Yankee cousins appear to have arrived, and even the most orthodox of Low Churchmen would still be shocked at the spectacle presented by a group of worshippers discussing politics in the aisle whilst the bell was still summoning unwilling worshippers, or a solitary gentleman reading the Sunday paper whilst the organist was "playing in" his reverence the parson. But though we have not, happily, reached this stage, we cannot attempt to deny that there is little in the appearance and conduct of an ordinary congregation calculated to impress the spectator with a sense of the sacred character either of the place in which they are met, or of the work in which they are engaged. It is not so, however, with the congregation of St. Alban's, Holborn. Like most members of the extreme party to which they belong, they attach great importance to forms and ceremonies, and, so far as outward appearances, at least, are concerned, there is nothing more to be desired in the way of devoutness from them.

Away, at the further end of the building, hardly to be seen by those who are standing near the door, is the altar, where twinkling lamps are hung, and flowers and rich drapery add picturesqueness to the general effect. It was upon this altar that those candles burned which were formally quenched at the command of the legal representatives of the head of the English church; and even now you may see the clergy, or "priests," as they prefer to



be called, attired in gorgeous vestments, bending before it, prostrating themselves on the steps leading to it, and performing a variety of manœuvres, which, however legitimate in themselves, have not, it must be confessed, ceased to be novelties to the ordinary English churchman. Apparently, however, all idea of novelty with respect to these rites and observances has long since been lost by the regular worshippers. They, it is evident, have no thought of anything but the work of worship in which they are engaged; and the devout attention with which they follow the various directions of the rubric, the zeal with which they join in the fine processional and penitential hymns, which are the favourites at St. Alban's, and the attention with which they listen to the sermons, all go far to prove how much their hearts are in the work in which they are engaged. This St. Alban's congregation is by far the most striking part of the spectacle to be witnessed within the walls of the church. Except a few ladies of position who attend the place Sunday after Sunday, the congregation is almost entirely composed of members of the lower middle-classes. Judging by mere outward appearance, it would be tolerably safe to guess that the great majority of the men present had been gathered from the neighbouring shops and offices. Most of them have the unmistakable stamp of the clerk or the tradesman about them. Here and there may, of course, be seen some stranger, of an entirely different class, who has strayed to this remote sanctuary from the West End, out of mere curiosity. But there is no church in London in which the strangers are more easily recognised than St. Alban's. The regular attendants, we are bound to say, go there to worship, and they do so with every outward appearance of zeal and devotion. The strangers, we are ashamed to say, "go there to stare;" and it not unfrequently happens that in their desire to maintain unimpaired the integrity of the Protestant Church, they are guilty of conduct which is hardly compatible with any very profound respect for the cause which they profess to have at heart. We do not propose to enter into any controversy on the great Ritualistic question, or to express any opinion as to the wisdom or folly of those who have taken prominent parts in this extreme movement; but all liberal and fair-minded persons will, we are sure, agree with us in the opinion that, whether they may be right or wrong in their peculiar views, the Ritualists have an equal right with any other body of their fellow-countrymen to be allowed to worship undisturbed by the indecent interruptions of men who make zeal a mere cloak for intolerant fanaticism. Nothing is more trying than to see, as we have seen not once or twice, but upon several occasions, some gentleman whose enthusiasm has outrun his discretion, disturbing

the whole congregation at St. Alban's by a protest, which, although it might doubtless be very fitly made at another time and place, ought never to have been offered at the most solemn moments of our worship. To return to the general congregation, however, another of its features is the number of the very poor and the very young who are to be met with in it. For his own part, the writer must confess that though, like most other persons, he first went to St. Alban's very strongly prejudiced against the place and all connected with it, something at any rate was done to remove his prejudice when he saw that it had at least this advantage—that it was open alike to the very poorest and the very richest. We know, of course, that, theoretically, this is the case in all the places of worship in England, with one or two exceptions ; but we must confess, with shame, that our practice does not accord with our theory ; and that there would be some dismay in a West End church if a few of the worshippers—dirty, and ragged, and disreputable—who are almost always to be seen at St. Alban's, were unexpectedly to be ushered into it. The children, too, seem to have special care and attention ; and you will find such a collection of the very poorest of London boys and girls as you might search for in vain in almost every other church in the metropolis. This, it seems to us, is decidedly a step in the right direction. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of Ritualism, it is certain that the mode of worship pursued in Ritualistic Churches can hardly fail to produce a stronger impression upon the minds of children—and especially of such children as those to be found in the neighbourhood of Hatton Garden—than a similar form. Whether the impression thus produced would, or would not, be a healthy one, is a question we must leave casuists to decide.

It is time, however, that we said something about Mr. Mackonochie, the well-known incumbent of St. Alban's, who is the virtual leader of Ritualism in London. Mr. Mackonochie's name has been much before the public of late years, and his conduct has been the subject of not a little unfavourable comment on the part of a majority of his fellow-churchmen. Whether these comments have been deserved we do not pretend to say : it is, however, only right to point out that the section of the church to which he himself belongs regards him with enthusiastic esteem and confidence, and that he has at least given more than one proof of his thorough personal earnestness in the cause which he has at heart. And indeed this earnestness appears to us to be the only quality for which Mr. Mackonochie is really remarkable. He is not, like the leaders of most of the parties into which the religious community of England is divided, a man of very marked intellectual power ; he

is not even an eloquent preacher, or a powerful orator; he has never gained distinction as a controversial theologian or a practical divine. It has been the force of circumstances indeed, rather than anything else, that has brought him to the front in this great battle of Ritualism. Had he been placed in some obscure country village, or in some provincial town, it is more than probable that Mr. Mackonochie might have carried his peculiar views to any length without attracting a tithe of the notoriety which has now fallen to his lot. It was the special history of St. Alban's, and its position in the heart of London, which brought that church and with it its incumbent into so much notice. It may, therefore, rather be said that St. Alban's has made Mr. Mackonochie famous than that he has made the church famous. Nevertheless, had he not been a man of burning zeal and indomitable perseverance he would never have gained the position which he now occupies as one of the foremost members of the Ritualistic party. It is to his unflinching firmness in meeting the prosecutions to which he has been subjected, and in contending against the various other descriptions of opposition with which he has met, that the place he holds in the esteem of his followers is to be attributed. That it is no mean place all who have any acquaintance with the present state of Ritualism in England must be aware.

It must not be supposed, however, that the incumbent of St. Alban's, Holborn, devotes all his time and energies to the public services in his church. On the contrary, Mr. Mackonochie deservedly enjoys a high reputation amongst all classes of the community as a zealous and indefatigable parish priest. We have already said something of the labours which he has undertaken in the district where his church stands—of the extent of those labours few persons have any idea. In no part of London were such exertions more required than in the neighbourhood of Hatton Garden, and whatever the princely city merchant, to whose munificence it is owing that the church of St. Alban's has been built and endowed, may think of the peculiarities of the worship conducted there, he does not, we are sure, regret the zeal which Mr. Mackonochie and his assistant clergy display in succouring and comforting the poor and wretched whose miserable houses surround the church. They are not alone in this work—it is one in which they but take their part along with good men of every creed and denomination, and we cannot pretend that any special credit is due to them in particular for anything that they have done. Nevertheless, it is well to remember that whatever may be Mr. Mackonochie's claims upon our praise or our censure, as a Ritualist leader, and however small may be the reputation to which he is entitled as a theologian, he at any rate deserves to be re-



membered as one who has done good service to the poor around him at a time when the friends of the poor were by no means so numerous or so zealous as they might have been.

Westminster Chapel resembles St. Alban's, Holborn, in at least one respect. It stands in the midst of squalor, crime and poverty. Hardly a stone's-throw from Buckingham Palace and the splendid mansions of Belgravia, and but a few minutes' walk from the Houses of Parliament, it yet lies amongst some of the worst "rookeries" of which London can boast. Hardly anywhere indeed in the metropolis is there to be found so much of vice and of want, of hunger and of filth, as in the courts and alleys which abound in the older parts of Westminster; and to those of our legislators who desire to obtain a little personal experience of the manner in which a certain portion of the people for whom they are supposed to make laws live, we could hardly suggest a more interesting task than a walk from New Palace Yard to James Street, where Westminster Chapel stands. During that walk, short as it is, they might, if they chose to use their eyes, see more ragged children playing in the filthy roadways, more boys and girls growing up to vice and immorality, more lazy men and sluttish women, than they would meet with in the district surrounding the Seven Dials itself. Indeed St. Giles's cannot after all compete with Westminster in respect to the amount of poverty and crime to which each gives shelter.

The casual wayfarer who after such a ramble found himself in James Street, and entered the chapel where the Rev. Samuel Martin preaches, would doubtless be greatly astounded at finding such a building in such a locality. For Westminster Chapel is one of the largest places of worship in the metropolis. It cannot, of course compete with the huge "tabernacle" erected by Mr. Spurgeon within a stone's-throw of the "Elephant and Castle;" but it is nevertheless one of the first amongst less ambitious places of worship. The building cannot claim any architectural beauty. It is neat, unpretending, and well-lighted, and that is all that can really be said in its favour. The shape is peculiar, the building being a flattened ellipse. On the floor are numberless open benches, arranged very much after the fashion which has been adopted at St. Alban's, and which is daily growing in favour in all places in which the pew-rent system has been abandoned. Above the ground floor are two very large galleries, the first stretching completely round the building, the second extending along the two sides. The pulpit is remarkable for its singularity. It is of enormous size, resembling more in dimensions one of those pulpits to be seen in foreign cathedrals than anything of the same kind to



be met with in England. Like many of them it is circular in shape, the material of which it is composed being oak, which is very handsomely carved. As in most Nonconformist chapels, an air of substantial comfort pervades the building. Architectural beauties there may be none to boast of; but there is at least no difficulty in seeing and hearing the preacher from every seat in the chapel—which is more than can be said of some of our most beautiful ecclesiastical edifices. Every seat, too, is a comfortable one; for through the liberality, if we mistake not, of Sir Francis Crossley, the whole of the benches in the chapel were covered some time ago with handsome velvet-pile carpets, which make sitting upon them a much pleasanter task than it often is in our finest new Gothic shrines, built upon Mr. Scott's most approved designs. What the amount of accommodation actually provided is, we are unable to say; but the building must contain seats for at least two thousand persons.

Westminster Chapel, of which we have given this brief sketch, may be said at the present day to be the cathedral of the Congregationalists or Independents. It does not take that rank amongst the churches of the body to which it belongs on account either of its size or its position. Time was when the King's Weigh House Chapel, where Mr. Binney ministered so long, held that position, and at an earlier period still, the ugly "tabernacle" in Tottenham Court Road was justly entitled to claim it. Nevertheless, whatever may have been the case in the past, we do not imagine that any one will now dispute the pre-eminence of Westminster Chapel as an Independent place of worship. It is at all times occupied by a very large congregation, and during the season those who may be described as the aristocracy of dissent, the Nonconformist members of Parliament, and the wealthy manufacturers from Yorkshire and Lancashire, who do not disdain to pay a yearly visit to London, may almost all be found there. Indeed, we do not know of any London clergyman who has the honour of preaching weekly to so many members of the House of Commons as are to be found every Sunday morning, between February and August, within the walls of Westminster Chapel. The social position which such a congregation occupies amongst the Nonconformist bodies cannot of course be a mean one, and upon this ground alone it might fairly claim the distinction of being considered first amongst the Independent churches.

It is, however, to the character of the minister of the church that its special position is to be attributed. Now that Mr. Binney has retired from the active work of the ministry we believe that Mr. Martin is generally accorded the first rank amongst Congregational ministers. Like many eminent dissenting preachers he



REV. SAMUEL MARTIN.





has raised himself from a comparatively humble position in life to that which he now occupies. It is chiefly, if not entirely, by his powers as a preacher that he has gained that wide-spread popularity which he now enjoys amongst all classes of Nonconformists, and which has extended not a little amongst the members of the Church of England. And certainly Mr. Martin is a remarkable preacher. He does not pretend to the eloquence of a Wilberforce or a Liddon, or to the argumentative powers of a Thirlwall or a Binney: he accepts a quieter and in some respects a humbler style than that which distinguishes these eminent men. Nor does he attempt the vigorous plain speaking which characterizes Mr. Spurgeon. His style of preaching is a decidedly peculiar one. It is remarkable for its quiet polish, for the beautiful ideas which run through the texture of most of his sermons, and above all for the wonderful power with which he expresses his sympathy with human wants and human suffering. It has been well said that the gospel which had nothing to say to the sorrowful, which had no words of comfort for those who stand above the graves, to which they have committed "their all of earth delight," which had nothing to tell to those who find themselves beaten back in the battle of life, belated wayfarers, disheartened soldiers, lonely and desolate pilgrims, would be a gospel to which there are very few amongst us who would care to listen. It is when rent asunder by a great grief, or bruised by the pressure of a thousand minor cares, that the human heart is most ready to receive the message of a Divine love. And yet unfortunately for those who are labouring under crushing woes or numbing cares it is but a small portion of the men who occupy the pulpits of the various churches, who have the enviable power of preaching that gospel which is especially a gospel for the sorrowful and the heavy-laden, in such a manner as to suit their special needs.

There are many preachers who can build up a brilliant and powerful argument in support of any of the dogmas of our religion; there are many more who can deliver eloquent harangues upon some of the more dramatic incidents of Scriptural history, or utter powerful appeals to those who have as yet remained with eyes unopened to spiritual light, but how few, how very few, are there who can tread softly above the stricken heart, sowing in the furrows left by the hot ploughshares of sorrow that seed of consolation apart from which there is no real relief for the suffering! En enviable, indeed, is such a gift as this, akin to, and yet even higher than that of the physician who gives relief to our bodily ailments, or brings back health to our enfeebled frames. It is Mr. Martin's happy lot to be specially a preacher to the sorrowful; and when we remember this fact, we can hardly wonder at the

popularity which he enjoys. There is little art, there is no trick of literary workmanship in those sermons of his upon which thousands of people will hang breathless. He does not wander away into the domain of politics, does not imagine that he is addressing the scholarly critics of an academy, or a mere mob anxious to be tickled and excited. Sunday after Sunday as he enters his pulpit at Westminster Chapel, he seems to feel that he has before him a company of weary and sorrowful pilgrims, who have turned aside for a moment from the dusty and painful road to drink at this wayside well. And Sunday after Sunday, with wonderful simplicity and wonderful success, he brings home to them the soothing and healing truths of the gospel which he preaches. There are not a few preachers in London of higher intellectual powers than Mr. Martin—many, as we have said, of more commanding eloquence, but we know of no one from whose words the sorrowful would be more likely to obtain comfort and consolation.

It has been said somewhere that Mr. Martin's face is a sermon in itself. It is indeed a very striking face—a face stamped with zeal, earnestness, tenderness—a face, too, upon which are to be seen signs that this preacher to the sorrowful is not himself unacquainted with deep sorrow.

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## METAPHYSICAL SPECULATIONS.

WHY dwells the soul on time to come,  
 The heart on time that's past and o'er?  
 That flies on to its parent home,  
 This clings unto its native shore.

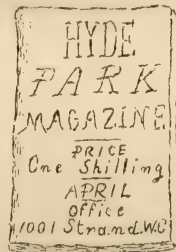
Does spirit penetrate the heart?  
 Is feeling else alone its light?—  
 Do thoughts which there or glow or smart  
 Exist beyond the churchyard night?

Or is the soul alone a power  
 Lent to a finely-formed machine,  
 Such as is sunlight to the flower,  
 Or motion to the ocean green?

And doth not soul to soul resemble,  
 Though varying minds they are breathing through,  
 As the same wind makes harp-strings tremble,  
 And shudders the broad forest through?



West London.



AUTHOR

AND

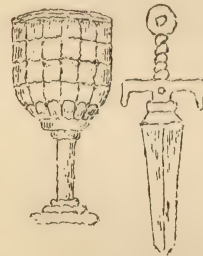
ANTIQUES.



AN ALLEGORY.



West Country.



YE BOWL  
and  
DAGGER.

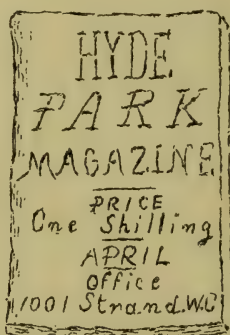






West London.

ALTY



## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

## OVERTURE.

EXCELLENT Unknown, I have just read my MSS. over carefully from beginning to end, and regret to say that I am afflicted with misgivings. I regret to be obliged to admit that the *chef d'œuvre* on which I have expended so much pains, strikes me on second thoughts as being a trumpery concern. It deals with vulgar people and everyday incidents. It is without passion, or poetry, (you see I anticipate the critics.) When writing it, I was struck with the profound knowledge of character that it displayed, with the extraordinary vigour of the descriptive passages, with the scrupulous fidelity of the details, and with the highly original nature of the plot; but it occurs to me now, to use a vulgar metaphor, that my story "will not set the Thames on fire." In other words, as I have said already, it is a trumpery concern. This, however, is an age of trumpery stories. The apology no doubt is insufficient, but it is the best that I can offer. Still there is one thing, madam, which I can safely promise. My muse, though possibly dull, is a strictly virtuous young person, warranted free from vice of any kind. Unlike certain baggages, who have lately flaunted themselves in the libraries, she will not frighten your young people out of their wits, or insult all your religious and moral convictions in rapid succession.

No, decidedly mine is not a sensational novel; and I think it only fair to give you full warning of the fact, lest you should hastily turn over page after page in a forlorn hope of getting to the murder at last. I am afraid I shall not be able to introduce you to anyone horribly wicked, or aggravatingly good, as my experience of the world has been of an ordinary, every-day kind, and I never met a seductive and golden-haired murderess, or a "bearded Viking,"—to my knowledge—out of a dream.

I have never been pursued by a mad bull. I have never leapt on the back of an untamed steed, and broken the beast in satisfactorily at a moment's notice. I have never forged a will. I have never suborned a withered crone to change an infant at its birth. I am a married man, but I never—shame that I must

confess it—plunged into the foaming torrent, and rescued Belinda from the too envious waters, at the risk of my life. I have never wandered along the sea-coast with my beloved, and been overtaken by the tide. I have never fought a duel and winged my adversary—a most experienced dog, with the blood of three rivals on his soul—and then fled in horror from the scene, feeling that I had the brand of Cain upon my brow. I have never secreted a Document, or locked my wife—Heaven protect my poor darling from all harm—in a mad-house. I am not a wicked baronet, nor a remorseless earl. I am a very easy-going mortal, and by no means at warfare with society, or constituted authorities, though I will own that occasionally I grumble at the tax-gatherer. I am not a bigamist, and I can go to church on Sundays with a tolerably clear conscience. I daresay I am not much, if at all, better than other people, but certainly I am not a hundred and fifty times worse than the worst of my neighbours.

As I say this, my darling—who is looking out from the bow-window at the sunset—turns round and laughs.

“Why, you stupid old thing,” she murmurs, coming across the room, and putting her dear face close to mine, “what should make you think that *you* could ever be a villain? Why you can’t even scowl!”

Baby tries to clamber up on to my knee. Tibbalt, a stout, sleek, but presuming animal, crawls over my MSS., and makes a cunning snatch at the top of my pen, and I feel that I am not so very, very wicked, after all.

I ring my bell. Let the crier be heard:

“O—yez! O—yez! This is to give notice: if any of you care to hear a quiet story, told in a quiet way—a story about men and women, and not concerning ghouls and vampires—I shall be emboldened to proceed. But if you wish to be kept in an ecstasy of horror, or to be humoured with choice tit-bits, piquant but naughty, I must reluctantly refer you elsewhere.”

I have seen too much of life to wish to make a sport of horrors. I have seen villainy enough in the world without wanting to find more in fiction. I have witnessed so many contrasts in real life that I have no need to draw upon my imagination for more. I have met tragedy and broad farce walking hand-in-hand. I have encountered brutal ruffianism separated by something like a foot and a-half from patience in suffering, worthy a martyr. I am afraid somehow, I have not much sympathy with the sorrows of the conventionally silly young woman, crossed in love for the conventional barber’s dummy. The woes of wax-work are very amusing, no doubt, but in the face of disease, destitution, and starvation: of the agony and fathomless sorrow



of human beings, of men, women, and children, of brothers and sisters, they cease to amuse—they are simply provoking.

Sometimes as I sit at home here, in the dead of night, all the house at rest, without a sound to disturb me, with the odour of flowers stealing in through the window, with a cool air pure as the breath of angels floating gently in from across the ripe corn, I feel sorrowful, I can hardly tell why; and moving from my desk where I have been writing, I gaze up at the myriads and myriads of pitying star-worlds that float in the solemn depths above me, and as I do so, voices like that have long been hushed, seem to whisper to me out of the darkness.

I think of certain nights spent in the greatest of great cities: nights, some of them, that but for the angry impatience of the crowded streets would have been calm and holy: nights on which you could look up at the moon and the stars, and the purple sky and the fleecy clouds, and forget the maddening labyrinth of walls that hemmed you in, and see once more the solitary fields and the far-off hills, the valleys wrapt in spotless mist, the hedge-tops sparkling in the silver moonlight, the very trees lulled in repose, all nature dreaming tranquilly to wake on the morrow with fresh loveliness, and with inexhaustible bounty.

I think too of nights, when looking overhead a black velvet pall seemed stretched from housetop to housetop: when the wind dashing here and there in angry gusts, smote your face with a deathly chill: when the flickering lamps glared wildly on wan, famine-stricken features: when the dusty, sour-smelling roads were thronged by a reckless, turbulent crowd, and nothing was to be heard but hoarse cries, frantic oaths, drunken laughter, and the deafening rattle of vehicles.

I feel very sorry when I think of nights like these. I am ashamed almost that I have ever witnessed such. I can groan to think that for some thousands of human beings about three hundred and sixty-five nights in every year are of the kind that seems to me so lamentable and so shameful.

I see snow falling heavily, pavements slippery with ice, streets deserted by everyone who has no fancy to be frost-bitten, and who has a home, or even a den to go to; and then I think of those who *must* wander—aye, even on nights like these, poor creatures—not all scamps and sturdy, obstinate vagrants—as some capon-fed philosophers would have you believe—mere children, many of them, who have never had a chance. Poor, poor things, without a resting place, without a friend, without anyone to whisper a kind word to them; hungry, despised, and insulted; pushed here, pushed there, without hope, with disgrace

to look back upon, and with the dark river of death frowning upon them from ahead. Rare blossoms once upon a time, mere weeds now; something to be flouted and laughed at; something to be thrown aside to perish on a dung-hill; something to be shocked at in this year of grace, but not so long ago tender flowers, pure souls, the joy of a father, the pride of a mother; not a broken toy, but a living emblem of gladness and innocence.

I think of poor creatures like these, wasted, despised, utterly forgotten—except, perhaps, in some dark, far-off nook, to which you or I, dear reader, should be sorry to penetrate—and I say to myself here truly are real objects of pity, here is there fruit for mourning. Compared to the sorrows even of these, what are the woes of the cynical but wealthy young artist whose pictures *can't* be made to sell; of the yellow-haired damsel who in a fit of jealousy marries the baronet she detests, and then frets herself into a decline because she cannot be united to the true object of her affections?

But Mrs. Grundy need not set her cap up. I may beg the reader now and then to accompany me for his own good to some of the dark corners of the earth; but my muse—who is a bit of a prude—is wholly incapable of singing the woes of a baggage or an outcast.

I think of nights—oh, such cold nights—spent by some I know, in a garret, without a stick or a lump of coal to give a bit of warmth, and with only one thing to do, which is to sew, and sew, and sew, with burning eye, and wearied finger, and aching heart, all to get four farthings from a Christian, and three from a Jew, *plus* a scowl from the board of guardians, who don't want you *in* the "house," and won't help you to keep *out* of it; and—no, not wholesome food or comfort—but a mere something to persuade body and soul not to part company quite at once, just to hold on like brave warriors for a day or two longer.

I think of certain gently nurtured girls, who less than eighteen months ago had a happy home, who never had seriously to work, who never felt hunger or expected that they would feel hunger—far less that they would soon be starving; who had comforts in plenty, and luxuries, and servants to wait upon them; who were very pretty, and very agreeable; who could dress well, and who loved dancing and croquet parties; but who, sooth to say, were not particularly useful. What has become of *them*, I want to know? All their money has gone: every sixpence, every farthing has been swindled away. How do these poor creatures manage to support themselves? How does genteel poverty—the most hopeless form of poverty—shift for itself in the ravenous nights of winter?

Reader, I think of these things, and I am very sad.

I have no stomach for heroics. I can't pump up my tears for Lady Gwendoline; she is much to be pitied, I daresay, but if she would only use her brains a little, and look about her, and consider what she has, as well as what she has not, I think she will arrive at the conclusion that she is a very silly and ungrateful young person, and that if she is joined in the bands of matrimony to an amiable but excessively common-place young squire, the wisest thing she can do is to make the best of not so very bad a bargain, and by no means to mope to death because she cannot enjoy the voluptuous kisses of a Viking.

No, I don't believe in the rights of conjugal infidelity; in the joys of revenge; in the delights of fame; in the heart-breaking monotony of ordinary every-day happiness. So I announce once for all that I have not the slightest intention of devoting four or five hundred pages to the woes of a selfish glutton, or of an ignorant discontented fool. After what I have seen in real life, I feel ashamed of the tinsel griefs, and trumpery martyrdoms, and sham disasters that we think worthy of commemoration in fiction.

I shall make no apology for having neglected to lay in a stock of heros and heroines. If you make up your mind to read me, you must be content with the sorrows and joys of mere men and women; of common-place mortals whose tribulation is poverty, perhaps, or disease, or the desertion of friends, but certainly not an impotent craving to gratify some evil desire.

I ought to tell you that my story is not wholly original. Certain parts of it which concern family matters have been supplied and put together in the form of notes, by a friend.

And with this I shall respectfully take my leave—at least for the present.

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## BOOK I.

### CHAPTER I.

#### FROM OURSELF.

THE Editor of "Author and Actress" must apologise for the redundancy of his next contributor. He is an inveterate gossip. Like more than one other country gentleman, he has a good deal of spare time on his hands. He is a man with notions of his own, and he likes to air them. The Editor has not, however, cut him short. Pearls of price, or, at least, electro-plated spoons, are sometimes to be gleaned even from dust heaps.



## CHAPTER II.

## FROM A VALUED CORRESPONDENT.

I AM the last person in the world for anything of this sort. But I suppose it must be done. I hate writing. I will say honestly that I hate work of all kinds. Why should you pretend to like a thing that was imposed upon man as a curse? But pens, ink, and paper are to me simply detestable. I never know how to make a start. If I could only get a shove forwards I think I should do well enough. When I was at school and had a "theme" to write, I always used to go about and ask some one to give me a "beginning." I can't do that now—more's the pity. Why can't people, or why *mayn't* people write as they speak? I flatter myself I am not quite a dummy at a dinner-table, but pop me down at a desk, in a nice quiet room, where I am sure not to be interrupted, and I am done for. Eugh! how I hate those quiet rooms. They drive me mad. I *can't* write in them. They say that people's talking disturbs your thoughts; I am sure, for my part, a silence which can be felt drives them away altogether. Can anything be more maddening, when you have brain-work to do—I suppose I may call it brain-work—than the monotonous ticking of a clock, say on the first floor landing, the whetting of the scythes in the field at the bottom of the garden, or the far-off shouting of the lads playing cricket in the village? When you are ill, don't you wish people would take three or four firm steps, and have done with it, and not keep on whispering and fidgeting about on tiptoe. A piano in your room is bad enough, but a piano next door——!

All very true, you answer, but what you describe is not silence. Right, logical friend, but it is part of that which we *call* silence. You see, in this imperfect world of ours, most things are comparative. Silence is often amongst them.

As far as I am concerned I think there is no place for writing, at all events of a winter evening, like your own drawing-room. A nice, snug little drawing-room, mind you—not an assembly hall for half the county—where if you get bothered, and I always get bothered pretty soon, you can turn round and see a certain dear little face by the fire, and where the darlindest girl in the world looking up from the last new novel will put you to rights with a kiss, or brush your mental cobwebs away with that new song you like so much, or the latest thing in waltzes on the piano. Ah, I daresay, if I went in for the higher walks of literature, I should not be able to manage as I do. But, thank goodness, I don't; no, nor for any walk of literature at all if I can help it. Eugh! fancy people writing for fun—no, for the pleasure of the thing I suppose I ought to say. I don't believe they ever do. Writing

is a bad habit, easily formed, and which, once contracted, sticks to you like a burr. That is the long and short of it. You begin to write just as you begin to gamble—for the sake of the game. The passion grows upon you, and you hate it as you always do a bad habit, and would shake it off if it wasn't too much trouble to do so. As far as I can see, professional writers would be only too delighted to throw pens, ink, and paper into the fire, only they can't afford such a reckless proceeding. I daresay Sinbad the Sailor was rather amused at first at the notion of taking the old man of the sea on his back; he would show off his strength, and prove that he had a better muscular development than people gave him credit for. But he soon had enough of *that* game; so it is with writing. You begin it as an amusement, and find, before long, that you have laid on yourself a burden so grievous that save me from touching it even with my little finger. How many authors, do you suppose, keep on writing a couple of novels a twelvemonth, not to mention newspaper articles, occasional reviews, short tales, and "verses in an album," for pleasure, and how many merely because of the *res angusta domi*? You see I have not quite forgotten my Latin.

To try back.

What a vulgar expression by-the-byé.

I was saying I hated a library of the good, old, dull, red-curtained, morocco-chaired, fusty atmosphered, and embarrassingly taciturn order. I am sure I don't know why, but rooms of this sort always make me think of wall-flowers. I have read in a book that smell is the most suggestive of all the senses, and I think the author was not far from right. Of course there is no accounting for tastes; some people like violets, and yet "them stinking flowers" are said to be eloquent of anything but sweet and pensive thoughts to the baffled huntsman. (I am not a huntsman myself; I thought you might suppose I was, as I live in the country, and hate indoor life; but I am not, more to my shame.) Now, if I have an aversion it is for wall-flowers—but let that pass. I once heard a fellow who was really not such a ruffian as you might imagine, define vanilla as "the essence of pretty girls." It is certainly a most refined, a most lady-like perfume. Somehow or another, pretty girls *do* make me think of vanilla, and vanilla in its turn seems compounded of the atmosphere that hangs about pretty girls. I wish I could express myself more poetically. Vanilla is the bashfullest, the least palpable of odours; perhaps, after all, it is less an odour in itself than the *suggestion* of an odour distilled for the Peris in Paradise. How pretty!

*Apropos* of wall-flowers, I meant to have indulged in a dissertation on the hatefulness of the colour brown; but I can't write

“fine” enough, Even as it is, I am horribly weighed down by the thought that there is a printer in the background, and that I must brush up my company language. I should like to be natural, but I daren’t.

How is it, I wonder, that people manage to write “like a book.” When I was a little boy I supposed that the author supplied the matter, and that the paragraphs were turned out by machinery. I should never be able to fit myself with a coat of the “Times” or Dr. Johnson pattern. Stage thunder isn’t in my line.

By-the-bye, I wonder whether people would really despise you, if, when in print, you went to the point at once? Why mayn’t you write as you think? I fancy I have the key to the riddle. The Literary profession, said some one, the other day, is fast becoming a mere handicraft. Just now, listeners pure and simple are in a minority, and it follows from this that the noble [army of poundtexts and quill-drivers must include a worshipful proportion of impostors and duffers. Wasn’t it De Quincey, who said,—I have never read De Quincey, but young Heatherington was talking about him at dinner, the other day—“literary people are in a large degree as little intellectual people as any one meets with?” No; your writers don’t engross the sense of the nation, be sure of *that*. But literature is an investment, and by fair means or foul the concern must be made to pay. You must show off your stock to the best advantage; if you have no ideas you must go in for words. Your cheap John, whose goods are none of the best, stamps, throws his arms about, shouts, and kicks up a dust, setting a fine example to certain General Tom Thumbs of the present day, whose powers, whatever their reputation may be, are certainly not those of simple-worded Whitfield, or plain-spoken, old John Bunyan.

The roundabout, pretentious, laboured, and conventional phraseology of our newspapers and magazines is as great a humbug as any of the day. Take a leading article, pick out the big words, as you would plums, break up the full sounding paragraphs, condense the ideas, and put them into plain language, and often what have you left?

Examine a theatrical or a musical critique, and the “words, words, words,” are to the ideas in the proportion of a thousand to one. Open a magazine—plainly all the articles have been turned out of a mould. If you don’t melt your notions down into a liquid tallow state so that they can be worked up into a candle of the same size and pattern as those already in use your fate is sealed. No admittance; “not suited” by any means. Now *my* argument is this. If a fellow has anything to say, why not let



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FATHER & SON .

him say it in his own language, which may not be as neat, but which will certainly be more forcible and appropriate than any you can invent for him. Why exclude a good thing merely because the author writes short sentences instead of long ones, speaks colloquially instead of oracularly, and writes plain English instead of circumbendibuses? Look at "Fraser," in its palmy days; how brilliant, how varied, how thoroughly characteristic the articles. Take any half dozen modern magazines, and as far as style goes, you can't tell any one contributor from any other. I can't for an instant believe that a man is really the stronger because you force him to walk about in plate armour that doesn't fit him. Fancy Carlyle being requested to tone his works down, to be respectably and decorously dull, to conventionalise his "Latter-day pamphlets," till they assume the grim, mouthy tones of a leader in the "Times."

I have done. You must think by this time that I mean never to begin my story at all. But I *do* love a gossip; in this part of the country there is not much society. *Apropos* of what I have been saying, let me wind up with an anecdote. When I was a little boy and used to go to church and be bored to death with sermons, I used to think to myself, "Ah! whatever I do, I'll never become a parson—I haven't head enough; a fellow must have talent, indeed, to go on talking for three quarters of an hour, more or less, in finely rounded periods, *all about nothing at all.*"

\* \* \* \* \*

You want me to tell you everything I know of the Darlington, and of the quarrel between Richard and Harry? Well, I flatter myself I am as well up in the family history as most people. But I am a bad hand at recollecting things, and you must not quarrel with me if I tell the story in my own way. Don't ask me to write grammatically, or to be coherent, or anything of that sort, or you will fidget me so that I shan't be able to say anything at all. Let me ramble, and twist, and turn as I please, and you will get it all out of me in course of time. You must put what I tell you in ship-shape afterwards.

I don't think you were ever at Culverton. It was a pretty place, but neglected. It might have been made to pay half as well again as it did; and the state of the people round about there was really disgraceful. The —shire folk are not a go-ahead race, and some years ago it was more the fashion than it is now for your great landed proprietors to treat their peasantry—a curious breed of mortals, supposed, but falsely, by theatrical managers to do nothing but dance in short petticoats and chintz waistcoats, at fourteen shillings a-week—as if they were less valuable, and by no means so delicately organised, as cattle. When



the *Morning Bee* sent a correspondent some years ago to spy out the land, he spied out the neighbourhood of Culverton with a vengeance, and described it in vigorous Anglo-Saxon, as anything but a district flowing with milk and honey. He spoke of immense tracts of dreary, unenclosed waste land, of secluded parks, and big, desolate houses—houses that had cost forty thousand pounds or so in the building, and which neither the proprietor nor anybody else could be persuaded to inhabit. In those days the county magnates of —shire were a race of somewhat migratory instincts, and, as a rule, fonder of drawing rents and wasting their substance with the bucks up in town, or in that naughtiest of naughty cities, Lutetia, than of presiding at Quarter Sessions, and building labourers' cottages. The metropolitan muse could sing, too, of a starving, weakly peasantry, of a deadly hatred between rich and poor, of tenements with one entire side missing, of damp mud floors, and tumbledown rooms, of a whole hamlet being shoved out of the way at a moment's notice because it spoiled the view—of miserable, uncouth, desperate creatures, pigged together, husband, wife, and children combined, in filthy and ruinous cabins, eight to the room. Ah! and though a certain indignant baronet, whose reputation was none of the most savoury, wrote a virtuous and feeling letter of remonstrance from his *club*, I can tell you—staunch upholder of Church and State though I be—that the graphic correspondent was not far in the wrong. It is a good job for those who have nothing to gain by a revolution that our landowners are not what they were twenty years ago. For a revolution, and a sweeping one, there would assuredly have been had affairs been allowed to go on much longer as they were in —shire even when *I* was there last. Mind you, I have not formed my opinions merely from what people told me. I have a pair of eyes, and I took the liberty of using them, and judging for myself. As it is as well that you should have a fair notion of the *locale* of, at least, an important part of my story, I will give you, in as brief a space as I can, the results of one of my inquisitorial rambles. There is only one thing I would have you bear in mind:—Do not forget that I describe what I saw *less* than fifteen years ago.

Suppose, then, that it is a fine summer morning, and that I have started, sketchbook in hand, and am trying hard to delude myself and other people into the belief that I am an artist. Yes, you may laugh, but I know enough about drawing to be able to support the character decently. In the course of some inquiries that I had made a few days previously, I had been told of a district in the north-west so poverty-stricken, so utterly forlorn, and so hopeless, that even the devil, who had visited it in quest of a

congenial spot, was said to have fled from it in disgust. I had heard of a village near which a sporting farmer kept a hundred cocks for fighting purposes. I had been informed, too, of localities the description of which agreed only with that given of some of the wilder parts of Ireland. But, considering that if I began with these unpromising districts I might contract prejudices at the outset, I made up my mind to hold them in reserve, and to begin with some locality considered rather more than averagely prosperous. Having arrived at this determination, I set forth on my pilgrimage.

Thanks to a chance acquaintance, I was able to travel over a good deal of ground very comfortably in a gig. Then, after a pleasant drive of some six miles through heavy lanes, half-hidden by steep banks and high hedges, and past snug farm-houses, muffled up in ivy, and blinking and blushing in the sunshine, like great lazy owls—only owls *don't* blush—I arrived at the spot that I had already selected as the basis of my operations. Here I dismounted, bade a kindly adieu to the natty little “vet.,” my companion, who wheeled off sharply to the left, and stood still for a moment to contemplate the prospect before me.

Let me try to describe it. I jotted down some memoranda in my sketch-book. They will help me, at a pinch.

In the foreground a winding lane, with, on one side, a bank some six or eight feet high, and on the other a stagnant pool, covered with slime and duckweed. R. C., or “right of centre,” as they say on the stage—you see I am obliged to bring private theatricals to my aid—and facing me, a building like a barn, with a thatched roof, mud walls, and lattice windows, mended with scraps of paper and bits of wood. To the extreme left, and just peeping over the hedge, a ruined outhouse.

But I look above me, and there is, oh! such a change. The deep blue sky, a sea tranquil and boundless—so immense, and so solemn—so profound, and so eloquent of love unfathomable. I look backwards, and there are the bright green leaves quivering and glittering in the sunlight; there is a fairy lane, bordered with wild flowers, and winding in and out amongst the over-arching trees; every now and then, too, I catch a glimpse of broad, undulating, richly-cultivated fields, through a modest parting in the hedgerows. I hear birds singing gladly, and yet so pathetically, as if they longed and longed to express their thankfulness, and yet could not be grateful enough to a beneficent Creator, whom wiser beings attempt to despise, and vex grievously every day. Shadows ripple gently on the ground; the unspotted leaves rustle and breathe soft music in the innocent country air, and there is such a sense of utter purity, of utter repose, of utter unworld-

liness, that, forgetting the cottages on which I have turned my back, I can almost fancy that I have intruded upon the Sunday of Nature. Bad thoughts fall away from me on the sudden, like Christian's burden; my past existence, my racketty, selfish, meaningless life in London, shrivels up and fades from my remembrance like a burnt scroll. I seem to have stepped into a new world, to be a new creature—I, to whom a week or two ago the very notion of life in the country had been detestable.

But the spell was soon broken. I turned, and there was the stagnant pool, the gloomy, weird-looking houses.

Not a sound—not a trace of a human being anywhere near. I went up to one of the doors, and knocked. A noise, as of a cart-horse moving on a paved road. Then a creaking of hinges, and I saw—blackness—a thunder-cloud—the darkness of misery.

For the moment I was taken completely aback, but in a little while my eyes got accustomed to the gloom, and I entered. It was a dreary, disheartening, God-forsaken place, into which sunshine seemed never to have penetrated. It was a small, low-ceilinged room, or rather cellar, with mud walls, and a floor made up of large, egg-shaped stones, wedged closely together. It was without a trace of comfort or civilisation, above or below, to right or to left. I sat down on a rude bench; my entertainer, who was a white-headed, stern-faced, but rather handsome old man, in a smock-frock and gaiters, accommodated himself on a tub turned topsy-turvy in the middle of what I suppose I must call the apartment. A hobbledehoy slouched shyly in a dark corner. A half-starved girl occupied herself in rolling out dough on a clumsy, thick-set table, and looked up now and then at the stranger with a careless glance, from which all animation and curiosity had died out years ago.

I could see that I was not welcome. There was a suspicion against me, and I combatted it as well as I could by producing my sketches, and praising the picturesqueness of the house. The word seemed a bitter sarcasm while I spoke it. But it is the fashion in the country to call everything filthy and tumbledown—picturesque. By degrees my host thawed. "It wor a pretty place, he had heard many a gentleman say; if I wanted to paint it, I was welcome to the seat. He would move it outside." He rose and fetched me some cyder. It was execrable stuff, such as the —shire peasant usually drinks, to his own heartfelt remorse a few years later. But it was offered with a readiness and sincere hospitality that it would have been churlish to refuse, and that was at once plaintive and dignified. I asked a few questions. I received *facts* for answers; no grumblings—no repinings. "Times were bad; that was certain. It was a poor life they had of it,



there was no denying. But others were worse off than they. *They* had their bit of garden ; some as they knew couldn't say as much as *that*. The machines, they thought, did them a deal of harm. It wasn't the gentry as was hard, but—well, now, Farmer Scott, over Norsted way, *he* were a stern man—and not the only one. Yes, they had their cottage ; it was eighteenpence a-week, and it was roomy, and rather better than the most. They didn't think wages was high in that part, but they was worse in others. Nine shillings a-week was what *they* got, but there were those as got ten, and others again who had less—eight, or seven, may be—but then they had their privileges.”

“What were these privileges ?” I asked.

“Well, they knew they *had* privileges, that was all. They had their bit of garden, maybe, and house rent free, and 'got help from the parson. Oh, some of the clergy was very excellent, kind-hearted gentlemen, especially the curates, but others—well, there, it didn't become *them* to speak evil of their betters. Yes, to be sure, they had their extras at harvesting time, but it wasn't much. They had long hours too, and the farmers didn't all give them the supper that they used to. They thought the times was getting harder and harder. It was terrible work sometimes, it was ; the rheumatism, too—”

“Ah,” interposed the girl, “poor father suffers dreadful from *that*.”

Just as she finished speaking, there was a knocking at the door. The old man rose hastily with a frown, and threw it open. A slouching, devil-may-care looking young fellow strode rudely past him, and threw himself carelessly on the table, where he began whistling and kicking his legs about ; then seeing that a stranger was present, he half shyly, half defiantly nodded his head. I saw that a storm was brewing. The old man clenched his fists, and his eyes glared angrily. He took a step forward, and raised his arm ; his mouth opened and twitched spasmodically, as if he could only half stifle the fierce words that rose to his lips.

The girl got up from her seat by the chimney, and threw herself imploringly before him. The eyes of father and daughter met, and the old man's arm dropped powerless by his side. He merely nodded at the intruder, who with a shrug of the shoulders, and a hard, bitter laugh, slouched from the room. Then my host dropped into the bench that I had quitted, and seemingly became dead to all that was passing. I wished him good day, but he took no heed of my salutation. I received a growl of adieu from the youth, who, spider-like, still remained half hidden in the darkness of his corner, and forcing some money on the girl, who, at first, resolutely refused it, started again on my journey.

The memory of that scene, so dramatic in its intensity, so impressive from the dim atmosphere in which it had occurred, and from the brooding silence that reigned over it, so full of suppressed passion and rugged pathos, so forcedly tranquil on the surface, and so tumultuous in its depths, so entirely unlike anything that I had ever seen in real life before, and so startling from its exact reproduction of that which when presented on the stage, had always seemed to me overdrawn and improbable, haunted me during the whole of my day's walk, and for many a week afterwards.

I started again on my wanderings through green lanes and across fields, but wherever I went it was the same old, miserable story.

Poverty beyond description, filth, hunger, despair, and disease. Rheumatism in the old; ricketts and consumption born of starvation in the young. Pale, blotchy faces, bandy legs, huge sores on children scarcely big enough to waddle; boys and girls with red, blood-shot eyes, and sullen, brutish countenances, who had never enjoyed a full or even a sufficient meal in their lives, and who hardly knew what the term "satisfied" meant. Mud floors beneath the level of the road, and described as being mere bogs in the rainy season; lattice windows not made to open; a huge chimney, and one or two twigs smouldering sulkily on the bars, by way of apology for a kitchen fire; a den downstairs to live in, and a cock-loft above as *the* dormitory. No traces of refinement, of comfort, or of hope. Sometimes, indeed, a shelf holding a few trumpery ornaments, sometimes a cutting or two from the cheap illustrated papers, or fashion books, and a few Scripture prints rudely coloured, and dabbed carelessly here and there on the rough unpapered walls. Nothing to read, nothing to please the eye, nothing to think about, nor anything in particular to eat. Wages hovering between seven and sixpence and ten shillings a week—with extras, oh yes, of course, with the everlasting extras, and few enough of them. No schooling for the young, except such as can be picked up in the fields, watching sheep, or frightening birds. No intelligence, no energy, very little self-respect; no murmuring, no menaces, but a kind of perverted resignation, an utter torpor of all the mental faculties.

Some cottages rather better than others, some with a strip of garden, others, again, with no garden at all. A kind of palace formed of a barn cut up into three tenements. Whole families away in the fields. A barrel of sour cyder in the dens of those who can afford the luxury. A family consisting of man and wife and five children, the father earning ten shillings a week, with "extras,"—that vague term—at harvest time, and paying a weekly

rent for his hovel of one and sixpence. An old woman of eighty, all alone, preparing a dough cake for dinner, and receiving a farcical stipend from the parish, there being no one to help her. All her grandchildren dead, every one of them, poor soul, all gone. She is quite contented, very talkative, but *so* poor, *so* cold. I looked at her and, with a keen sense of the ridiculous contrast, thought of my own dear mother. My heart misgave me as I remembered duties neglected and thought of opportunities lost to me for ever.

Wives away working with their husbands out of doors. They get little, you are told, but that little makes such a difference !

Starvation in the midst of plenty, under a bright blue sky, that smiles as the countenance of an angel, while the beautiful green leaves rustle joyously, and the birds sing, and the waters dance in the sunshine, and the valleys are filled with gladness. God help the poor !

No meal for the good man when he returns weary at sundown. The birds of the air have their nests, and the pigs have their sties, and if labourer Smith can't make himself *at home* in a chilly pest-hole that has been deserted all day, who can he blame but himself ? A wife as worn out and ill-tempered as her husband. Children who would think a little skim-milk and inferior rice bought at an exorbitant rate at the village a mile and a half off, a luxury. A cold hearth, a mud floor, filth as a whet, sour cyder as a stay, stench for an atmosphere.

In the towns men clamouring for employment. A hundred and fifty in one corner, all out of work. No money, nothing to eat. Women, whose faces have grown rigid from despair. Toil, toil, toil, and hunger and disease in payment.

Look in at that window ; the poor creature you see there is working at a loom, for bare life. She complains that the times are so bad. She used to be able to earn two and sixpence a week ; now she can only turn one and eightpence.

Lodgings for the poor—lairs for wild beasts. Worse than the cottages on the hill-side, for there is no escape to the open.

Poor Gaffer Brown ! He is housed worse than master's horse, by a good deal. " Dreadful bad," is he, with the rheumatics, he can scarcely crawl along. Yes ; it's the damp floor—always that damp floor—and the villainous cyder, and getting heated with work, and sitting down to rest on the damp ground under the hedges, and catching a chill. The curate, " a very good young man," but he (Gaffer aforesaid) don't know much about the vicar. Some well-to-do folk hereabouts. Sir Jasper Grant's estate, one of the biggest in the county. A kind-hearted man, Sir Jasper, but he don't care to live down in these parts ; spends his time



mostly in London or Paris. Never took to the place since the disagreement between him and Mr. Roger Throgmorton, of the Elms, about the young lady. It was a queer story, but it isn't for Gaffer Brown to judge his betters.

No; not much meat; a scrap of mutton last Christmas, and a taste of pork, now and then, on Sundays. If the gentry stayed at home more it might be better for everybody. Sir John Tucker, over Clyst-Hydon way, a good gentleman to his tenants, but a bit wildish, so they say. He and his father disagreed dreadful. He would do more, no doubt, only he has so many claims upon him. And his wife—not the poor man's friend—a great beauty, a fine woman, with dark, flashing eyes, and, lor! how she do dress! Sir John's brother, the vicar, a hard, proud man. His other brother, Mr. Reginald, hearty in his manner, but close-fisted; as fine-looking a young fellow as you'd see in a day's walk; the tallest officer, friend Gaffer has heard say, in his regiment. Gaffer and *Co.* don't see much of the gentry. Things would be better, however, they opine, but for the farmers. "They haven't no sympathy with the labourer—they treat him like a dog, and stand between him and his betters. There's Mr. Stockton, now, over Chardmouth way, a big, fresh-faced man, with three thousand pounds, so it is said, but lor! how he will drive those as are under him." Well, well, Gaffer Brown puts his trust in Providence, and times *may* mend. Yes, the machinery, *that* seems at the root of it all.

Rather a high rate of mortality; ten children, and seven of them dead. We have stopped, now and then, dear old friend, have we not, and admired the strong, hearty young of the poor. They must be strong and hearty, indeed, to pull through the Spartan ordeal of their infancy. We see those who live, we cannot count the scores who have perished miserably—out of the way. The mother, a cast-down, pale-faced woman, with a crushed arm. She unbandages it, that the strange gentleman may see she speaks the truth. It is twisted from right to left, and from left to right again. It was crushed in the mill—*that* was how it was done. The house stands up on the top of a little mound, with one strip of neglected garden in front, and another behind it. A stone floor, "Put together by ourselves, sir, husband and I," so says the woman, proudly; and she winds up with the statement "we don't earn much, but I can do a little work in spite of my arm."

Ah, sweet, rural districts! ah, tranquil valleys! ah, snug, smooth-shaven lawns! ah, noble parks, and over-built mansions, and picturesque but most filthy cottages! ah, quaint, pretty, innocent country town, where the poor are lodged worse than faggots, and your intelligent, well-to-do people never open their windows from morning till night *for fear of the dust*. Ah, lovers of the

unsophisticated ! ah, lovers of bad smells ! ah, patrons of typhus fever, and the abominable in all its branches ! ah, staunch foes of sanitary reform ! ah, hogs and sows, who wallow in filth and treat the very mention of drainage as an insult ! Ah, wholesome, hearty, Christian, loyal peasantry ! ah, generous landowners, intelligent farmers, you have been laying in, aye, and are still laying in, a pretty store of blessings for your descendants ; that the country has not been desolated by fire and sword, by famine and pestilence, by massacre and pillage, has been from no lack of pains on *your* side.

Thank God things have improved of late years. Go on improving, and look sharp about it, my complacent, refined, and rather out-at-elbows, little, great man, or a storm or a curse will overtake you, of which the elements are even now hard at work brewing under your very noses. Read the signs of the times, and quicken your pace ; let every real friend of order, of justice, of the constitution, of society in its present form, gird up his loins, and work manfully to throw up the barriers that shall keep out the flood. Let him strive his best to knit class and class together, to make the cause of rich and poor one and the same, to inspire mutual confidence and good faith, to promote self-sacrifice, to spread knowledge and Christianity, to exterminate the remnant of piggish luxury, mad extravagance, selfishness, and reckless sloth, once the reproach of the wealthy, and of which not a few lamentable specimens survive even to the present day.

I speak as a landowner to landowners. Take heed of the times. Think not only of your supposed grievances but of your duties ; you walk on treacherous paths ; beware that your footsteps slip not. You may have done much already—there is still more to be done in the future. Seek out the dark corners of your estates, and purge them of their filth and sin. Stand up, like men and Christians, to front the foe. Do your duty, no matter whether at the outset you gain or lose, conciliate prejudices, or make enemies. Then and then only shall you be justified in the eyes of God and of man ; then and then only shall the storm cloud that gathers above you break harmlessly—aye, even in blessings on your head.

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### CHAPTER III.

FIFTEEN years ago. *Say* fifteen years ago, or something less than that if you prefer it. I don't see why we should stick sla-

vishly to dates. Mild, inoffensive, retiring, studious boyhood! Charming schooldays that I always detested! Is that the way to begin? But I am not clever at an apostrophe; I suppose from want of practice—so I will pass on to something else.

But to what?

An idea strikes me. I will do what I intended doing a long while ago. Egad! as they say in the legitimate drama, I will begin my story.

I knew Harry at Elchester.

I was barely acquainted with Dick till after he had settled in London.

My father and Sir Francis were old friends, but as *we* lived in town, and the Darlington in ——shire, neither family for a long time saw much of the other.

Harry had been at Elchester rather less than a twelvemonth when *I* first went there.

He was a favourite with a certain set that was not at all to *my* fancy, and it was sometime before we struck up anything in the way of an intimacy.

You want to know what he was like?

Well, he was a little fellow, with dark hair and brown eyes; pert, vain, affected, and good looking.

Some of the young ladies in the town declared they were really quite in love with him.

He was exactly my own age, but higher up in the school than I had been placed, and he was rising steadily.

He was not clever—he was not even thought clever, but his people at home kept him crammed well up to the mark during the holidays.

I dare say you think I am envious. Recollect that I am speaking of things that happened a good many years ago. Perhaps I *was* jealous, once upon a time, but all jealousy of *that* sort has worn away long ago.

Young Darlington was a bit of a fop; but people in those days used to dress smarter than they do now. He was fond of brilliant waistcoats, and was a connoisseur in scarves, and I daresay his taste was none of the best, but boys, and even young men, are rather apt to be dazzled by colours.

He was particularly neat and clean. Indeed, he was as solicitous about his appearance as any woman. You never saw him of a morning with unlaced boots, an unbrushed coat, or tangled hair. No one ever caught him with a dirty face or grubby hands. If his trousers became soiled at football, he would go to his cupboard directly the game was over, and brush them carefully. He particularly prided himself on his collar and wristbands. He



was the only fellow at Elchester who had an everyday hat with a respectable brim.

All we lads rather prided ourselves on having disgracefully bad hats. Why we did so I should be puzzled to say, but we used to mutter something to one another about "good old customs that ought not to be allowed to drop." We used to hang our headgear, as the children of Israel did their harps, upon the willows, and pop at the expensive targets with small pistols. Whenever we were found out, we were soundly caned, and whenever we were caned, we used to bear the infliction with the best grace we could muster, and vow that we would repeat the offence on the first favourable opportunity; and I don't think we often forgot to fulfil the promise.

But to return.

Harry was not the sort of fellow to have many real friends, but he was well backed up, and superficially on capital terms with everyone.

He was not exactly popular, but he never had any quarrels. Sometimes, indeed, I have seen him mixed up in a dispute that seemed likely to end in a row, but as sure as fate, when the critical moment arrived, the stream would take a sudden turn in the direction of peace. I suppose Harry was a fellow of tact, and yet for some minutes after one of these outbreaks, he would always remain very pale. Some people said—no, I won't tell you what some people said, or you will go off again and accuse me of jealousy.

I think chaps were shy of quarrelling with young Darlington, because they did not want to make enemies in high quarters. Harry's friends, or admirers, or backers, or whatever you choose to call them, were mostly lads well up in the school, with whom it was dangerous to meddle.

Besides, though Harry was irritating, he always knew when to stop short, and could coax fellows whom he had annoyed, out of their ill humour. He was mischievous, apt to take liberties, fond of saying spiteful things, and had a particular pleasure in seeing anyone lose his temper, but directly matters were becoming serious, he would change his tone, and he was the best hand at making a full and rather mean apology that I ever knew.

No one had faith in his sincerity, but he generally managed to excite his antagonist's laughter, and the victim he so persistently and wantonly provoked, always knew well enough that his tormentor would not rest till by hook or by crook he had made his peace. And yet, though Harry often had loud battles of words with fellows far his superior in position, age, and strength, he had

no particular reputation for courage, I suppose because he was so singularly lucky in always escaping hot water.

If men—we all called ourselves men at Elchester—heard his impudence and bluster, they also heard his excuses, which were usually eager and hurried, and sometimes more than ample; and if they saw that he took liberties, they also noticed with a smile the pale face and deprecating gestures with which he would try to appease an adversary who was fairly in a passion.

No one had ever heard of Harry in a scrape, and yet it was pretty clear that the masters, and the Doctor in particular, looked upon him with distrust.

He was never found out of bounds, and yet it was known that he set the College rules at defiance as much as anyone.

In public he never swore, except occasionally, when out of temper, and even then he had sufficient command to mutter the oath under his breath. Yet his private conversation was by no means of an edifying character.

He never spoke ill of anyone, and yet now and then there was an expression on his face that bespoke anything but a mind at peace and in charity with all men.

It was only towards the close of his career that he began to bully those whom by virtue of his position in the school he could worry with comparative impunity, but he never missed a flogging, and always watched the punishment with a smile of complacent satisfaction. He could never help laughing at the wry face of the sufferer, and when the torture was over usually chaffed the poor fellow, but so good-humouredly that it was impossible to be offended.

It was whispered on tolerable authority that he sometimes egged on one of his influential friends to thrash a subordinate whom he disliked, but was afraid of attacking in his own person. Certainly he used to cut wasps in two, for the pleasure of seeing them wriggle about, and if he caught a spider he could never resist pulling its legs off. Such anecdotes as these have a purpose which is soon explained. To know a man well you must know his amusements. Trifles are great talebearers. Forgive the platitude for the sake of the truth it contains.

Harry was not professedly a member of the religious clique, but he took the sacrament once a month, with an appropriately grave face; dropped a sixpence, or a fourpenny bit if he could get such a handy coin, into the plate with the air of a public benefactor; and adorned his study with an admirable edition of Jeremy Taylor, and Thomas à Kempis in a mediæval binding, and four neatly framed engravings after the celebrated cartoons of Raphael.

He did his work in school well, but not brilliantly. His

translations were faithful, but rough. He had no sense of verbal niceties; apparently he had no perception of the inner spirit of an author. He did just what was required of him, but no more. Occasionally he incurred a mild rebuke, but he never earned warm praise, or more than the coolest of compliments. He stood in evident awe of the superior masters and yet seemed inclined to be impudent. He was as demure as a mouse in the presence of the doctor; he was a greater source of plague to the French and mathematical masters than any other lad in the school. He always had his work prepared in good time, but he never seemed to take any interest in it. But even had he admired an author I believe he would have shrunk from defending a work that most other people voted a nuisance. He wanted, he said, to pick up as much knowledge as would be materially useful to him in after life—no more, he wanted to get a succession of prizes and to pass some examinations, not to be a scholar. For literature as literature he cared not a farthing. Indeed, I fancy one book was pretty much the same as another to him. He worked steadily and patiently, six or eight hours a day, opening his lexicon with a groan, and shutting it up gladly. He was a close student because he had nothing to distract his thoughts. He could fix his mind on any one subject because there was nothing to allure him in any other. His lukewarm energies never flagged, and he seemed to care little whether Homer or Euclid were the order of the day. His Latin prose was better than his versification. He had a certain fluency of words and of phrases, and a large stock of other people's ideas. He took pains to a certain extent and avoided bad grammar and false quantities, but in poetic feeling even of the most crude and elementary kind he was altogether deficient.

About a year after my arrival at Elchester he attained, at an unusually early age, to the glory of the Sixth Form, and at once achieved a very fair degree of unpopularity.

His character developed itself, he was no longer under restraint. He seemed to think that there was no further need for him to try to please anybody, and his bluster and violence combined with the popular jealousy to make him an object almost of hatred.

His equals disliked him because he was so young, and shewed such an utter want of self-restraint and judgment.

His subordinates detested him because they still regarded him as one of themselves.

He had a great notion of his prerogative and was quite without ballast. He would have this, that, and the other done merely because he liked to see his slaves at work. He would thrash a lad much older and bigger than himself partly because he had a pleasure in bullying a fellow who a day or two pre-



viously could have thrashed *him*, and partly because he meant, as he said, to shew that he would not be trifled with. He dressed more extravagantly than any one else, because as he urged he was a Præposter and entitled to do as he pleased. He grew idler and idler, because, as he told his confidants, he had gained all that he wanted for the present, and the state of the law did not allow of his being flogged. He had made up his mind, he added, to do no more work in earnest for a year to come. By that time he would have to be preparing for the university. Till then he meant to enjoy himself.

With this determination he committed the odious crime of smoking under the very nose of his tutor. He invaded the town at night, and boasted to his friends how nearly he had been caught at a low pot-house.

The Doctor watched him with an evil eye, and the Sixth Form decided unanimously that if he did not mind his ways and that pretty soon, he should be taught that their prejudices were not to be insulted and their dignity lowered in the public estimation with impunity.

In the meantime our gay young friend had not the slightest idea that there was any mischief brewing, and with a sunny smile, and eyes brimming over with mischief, and looking handsomer and in better spirits than ever, he persisted in his impudence and petty tyranny till he became a general nuisance, and was sincerely hated by everyone above and below him.

At last the storm broke.

Young Master, who had quite lost his head, insisted on caning a youth nearly as tall again as himself. He bought a long stick and used it very clumsily. The tall youth received an accidental cut across the neck, lost his temper, and knocked Master Darlington down.

On this upwards of twenty-three young gentlemen were filled with dismay.

At Elchester it was the height of treason to strike a preposter in the execution of his duty, or even in what he conceived to be his duty, so dreadful consequences were anticipated by the boarders.

The tall youth, who was really a very long-suffering and innocent fellow, looked sheepish. Pretty Master Darlington ran off with an eye that promised to be very black, and told his tutor.

An enquiry was instituted. Slender was examined, and stutted dreadfully from nervousness. The Doctor questioned his too zealous preposter—who wept. The Doctor grew stern as a thunder cloud and rosy-faced Harry trembled. The Doctor was

a strict upholder of discipline, but not a fool. He had sense enough to see that the son and heir of Sir Francis Darlington, Baronet, was not exactly a model youth, or one discreet enough to be entrusted with authority, and——

Well, old Sir Francis himself came down in a day or two, and we had a very good dinner at the “Queen,” and in something less than three months more Harry had begun to read with a private tutor.

Yes, *we*, Sir Francis, Harry, and myself. When the blow came, poor little Master changed wonderfully. He put on a black scarf. He looked nervous and anxious and pale. He became one of the quietest and civilist fellows in the school. He shook me by the hand. He had one friend left, so he said, and he wished he had found out my value earlier. He was much obliged to me for my advice. He was sick of Elchester. He would be sure always to let me know how he was getting on. Now that we were friends he hoped I should not drop his acquaintance.

But we must say good-bye to Harry for the present. I want to introduce you to his brother.

About the time that I was beginning to eat my terms, I heard that Dick was up in town working as a clerk in a Government office.

I was rather surprised at this, as I had always fancied that he was an enterprising fellow, and cut out for better things.

However, I made up my mind to walk down to Whitehall the next fine afternoon, and see how things stood for myself.

I knew very little about Dick, but I had seen him once or twice in ——shire, and preferred him infinitely to his brother.

He was rather moody and retired in habit, but he had brains, and was a gentleman.

He had not done much in a regular way at Harton, and yet even the masters there had thought him rather a clever fellow.

He was earnest, self-contained, and painstaking. He either exerted himself to the utmost, or left things alone altogether. He never did anything by halves. He was a poor hand at Latin and Greek, but in mathematics he was A.1. He never boasted. He shewed satisfaction, but he never exulted. He never made too sure of anything, and if he were engaged on a pursuit—and engaged at all meant engaged seriously with *him*—his energies never flagged till the very last moment. He was not generally popular, but he had no bitter enemies. He had very few acquaintances, but two or three staunch friends. He seldom if ever broke the College rules, but he had made a firm stand more than once against the exactions of the Sixth Form, and the mischievous traditions still revered by most of his schoolfellows. The junior lads did not fear him in the least, and were rather inclined

to take liberties with him, as he shewed no disposition to trouble them in any way. The seniors, as a rule, held him in respect, but there were one or two black sheep who were always trying their best to humiliate and annoy him.

The Doctor had no warm admiration for poor Dick—who was really a hopeless scholar—but both he and the under-masters treated the dear old chap as a fellow who could be thoroughly trusted. As for the ill-used professors of French and German, the assistant mathematical master, and the teachers of drawing and dancing, Dick was the only fellow they really liked—or, in fact, who was decently civil to them.

Darlington Secundus, who had never been crammed, and whose parents openly stigmatized him as a fool once, gained a prize, rather to his discredit, in physical science—a branch of education viewed with suspicion at Harton, where it was treated as a black art, and contemptuously designated “stinktics.” He shewed no ambition to earn a scholarship, or to distinguish himself at the University, but the College bookseller, a civil, well-informed little man, who had himself risen from the ranks, used to shake his head and say, “Ah, you may laugh at Mr. Darlington now, but he will make a name in the world one of these days.”

Dick’s Latin verses were wretched stuff; his English prose by far the best in the school. Fellows who could not write a line used to come to him for help, and sometimes in the course of an evening he would turn out three or four themes, for different applicants, on the same subject. It was good practice, he said, to look at a question from several points of view. The not very heinous imposition was sometimes detected, and then he always came forward at once and avowed the part he had played in it. But occasionally some ignorant fellow or other would be puzzled and alarmed at the theme Dick had written for him, and instead of laying it on the tutor’s desk he would burn it, and turn out forty or fifty lines of rubbish of his own. It was the common complaint that Dick did not write “fine enough,” that “anybody could understand him,” and that it would not do to send up exercises in which there were references to events of the day, but no classical allusions.

I ought to tell you that Darlington, junior, and his brother had never lived on very affectionate terms, and that more than once they had quarrelled seriously.

It was for this reason that Sir Francis sent Harry to Elchester, and Dick to Harton. He had sense enough to know that if two brothers get on together worse in any one place than in any other, it is at the same school. Even the most amiable brothers seem to quarrel and wrangle under the same master. I am sure I can’t.



explain the phenomenon, but I believe half the family squabbles that disgrace society might have been nipped in the bud had the sons of the same mother been kept a fair distance apart when young.

I have been told that Dick was sullen, but I never found him so. He was seldom in high spirits, and certainly seemed to take very little pains to please anybody. But then he was shy and dreamy, though if he got with a friend who understood him he would brighten up wonderfully. He could be very amusing if he pleased, but he always seemed to fancy, when in company, that people looked down upon him and wanted to laugh at him. He was nervous and fidgety—that was all. I am quite sure he was not quarrelsome. He was a very earnest fellow, and earnest even in his pleasures. If he read a novel he would not skim a sentence, but digest the book thoroughly, and be glad to talk it well over with somebody afterwards.

If he went to the play he would sit out the whole performance, never taking his eyes off the stage while the curtain was up, and for the time, as he used to say, believing firmly in all that happened.

Of course I am speaking now of Dick as I knew him in London. All that I have told you about his school life I have received from "good authority." No, I decline to assume that I am bound to be more explicit. The foregoing description of Dick at Harton, corresponds exactly with the estimate I formed of him in later years.

He had a keener sense of enjoyment than anyone I ever knew, and though he was temperate in all his habits, I used to have a notion at times that if anything were to go seriously wrong with him he would turn reckless. He never expressed enthusiasm, but if he liked anything excessively his face would beam with delight. He never sneered at individuals, though he might have a contempt for certain systems. I don't believe he had the heart to ridicule or deliberately injure anybody. He was not much of a churchgoer, but I am sure he was a sincere Christian in the best sense of the word. I have never seen him so pleased and truly happy as when he has been watching a number of poor people, those whose lives usually have little enough of brightness, really and simply enjoying themselves.

He was one of the few men I ever knew who would allow that they could be beaten in argument. I have known him do more than this: frankly admit that he has been in the wrong, and gratefully adopt his opponent's convictions.

He seemed to put faith in very few people, but in those he trusted at all he confided almost rashly. He was subject to fits

of depression, but he was never cynical or maudlin. He had an irritable temper, but he kept it carefully if not always successfully under control. I only once saw him in a real passion, and then he frightened me; he became almost a maniac. I think his brother enjoyed provoking him, and I was always sure that harm would come of his doing so. The harm came at last, Heaven knows, though not quite in the way I expected,—but I must say no more at present or I shall get my story into confusion.

I am bound to own *this* of Dick. He had one or two strange crochets which he clung to affectionately, and though he never tried to force them down other people's throats, he was pained beyond measure and even excessively irritated if they were spoken of disrespectfully by people whose opinions he valued. Attacks from comparative strangers he could afford to ignore. Sometimes, if he thought you were merely chaffing him or trying to rouse his temper, he would either join, as far as his conscience would permit, in the raillery against himself, or try anxiously to turn the conversation into other channels.

But after all, though Dick was occasionally earnest in dispute, I am quite sure that he kept his deepest feelings wholly to himself.

You talk about a mystery connected with Dick's life. Say nothing against the dear old chap if you want us to remain friends. I am a partizan, I know it, and glory in the term. Justice be hanged. Dick was one of the best and truest fellows I ever knew. I won't hear a word against him.

But then, you say, if you can only have one or two points clearly explained you think you can knock a good deal of idle gossip on the head. Ah, that is a different matter. Now you are reasonable. I will tell you all I know.

But remember this. I made Dick's acquaintance when I was little more than a lad. I formed my opinion of him years ago, and I have never had reason to alter it since.

Ah, I dare say you think I am a fool, but when you come to read over all that I shall write, and then add to it all that *you* knew, and that other people have told you, you will veer round to the same way of thinking that I am of myself.

As for Harry—but I need not anticipate.

Don't start with a prejudice against me, even if you have no patience with a prejudice in my favour.

As for myself, I shall stick to my opinion, right or wrong; at all events till there is something better than mere gossip and surmise to go upon.

But wait, I must take breath.

## CHAPTER IV.

## INTERLUDE.

I PLACE the few remarks that follow between brackets, as you are at liberty to skip them if you please. I hope you will not do so; but perhaps you are impatient of my moralizing—which I own is none of the best—and want a little dramatic action by way of a change. If so, ignore the forthcoming chapter by all means.

Having been thinking a good deal about Dick and Harry, I have been led into a train of reflection as to the rights and wrongs of younger sons. As my jottings have grown naturally out of the tale, and seem to fit in better here than anywhere else, I shall make no apology for letting down the curtain for a minute or two. Whilst the grand set scene with which I presently intend to regale you is preparing, I beg most respectfully to solicit your attention to the little, and by no means painfully profound, *entr'acte* that follows. If it has no other result it will at least show that I am not a man of invincible prejudices, and that I am capable of seeing both sides of a question. My uncompromising advocacy of my friend's cause may lay me open to the imputation of being a partizan. Allow me to observe that I defend the dear old boy, "though," and not "because," he is a younger son. When a junior brother hates an elder it is usually out of pure jealousy; but I thoroughly concur in the estimate that Dick formed of Harry.

To begin.

[Do you believe in the grievances of younger sons?

An author has lately written a novel, apparently with the intention of proving that, if a perverse and stiff-necked father be sufficiently harsh and unjust to allow a junior member of his family only a paltry two hundred a year, the ingenuous youth is fully justified in running yet more deeply into debt; in spunging on his friends; in keeping away from his creditors; in borrowing money from good-natured people, who don't want him to return their loans; in betting extensively on the turf; in giving away half-crowns to crossing-sweepers; in living, *à la Monte Cristo*, in washing down every delicacy of the season with champagne, in fact, to make a long story short, in hurrying at express speed to the dogs, only to be rewarded by coming into a fortune of which he has been deprived by the machinations of an evil-minded rival, and by marrying a charming young lady, with whom, we are asked to suppose, it is possible for such an utter scamp as the hero to live happily ever afterwards.

Now I, for one, have but little regard for the sorrows of put-



upon gentility, and though younger sons are a race notorious for grumbling, I am seldom in the humour to waste much sympathy on their afflictions.

I am quite sure of this, that of all men, the most discontented is your well-to-do cadet, of a noble family, with an imaginary grievance. He has the faintest notion in the world what he really possesses; he is always ready to enumerate, with an injured air, the half-dozen comparatively insignificant advantages that he has not. He can look upwards, but not downwards. He can compare himself with a greater quantity, but not to a less. He occupies a medium position. He has never suffered real want; he has tasted, but cannot enjoy his fill, of luxury. His means are sufficient, but he is not rich. He occupies a respectable station in society, but he is by no means a man of importance. He can live comfortably, but not grandly. He is never really in need, but he must look carefully to shillings and sixpences. He is not obliged to drudge, but every now and then he has to do just enough work to worry him. For be it observed that genuine and protracted exertion stimulates; gingerly dilly-dallying with work is at the time irksome, and, both in the doing and in the remembering, it is provocative of bile.

Your tolerably well-to-do man, who has never struggled, and whose advantages are the free gifts of Fortune, knows very well that he has only hundreds while brother Tom can fling away thousands and be not much the worse for doing so; that he cannot enter Parliament; that he will be a man of title only some day or other, or perhaps never; but it is far from him to dream of comparing his lot to that of Jack Robinson who has to toil early and late, who has drudged for years past, and who will have to drudge for years to come, to whom a holiday is a rare Godsend, who may be ruined any moment by the explosion of the firm to which he has been sold in bondage, or by an economical fit on the part of the Government, into whose service he has been lured by fair promises, and who has to bring up a family and look respectable upon something less than a quarter of the yearly income dropped by Fortune into the lap of the thankless grumbler. No; all he can remember is that he is plagued with a troublesome elder brother—a stingy dog, who *won't* die, who has the property and the title, and who, with pardonable jealousy, regards his own mother's son as a ruthless antagonist watching hungrily till he can pick the bones of the rival whom too tardy Death yet hesitates to claim for his own.

Who so ready to lament his indigence as your younger son with five or six hundred unearned pounds as his yearly income? He it is who always declares that if things go on much longer as they

are doing at present, he will be driven into the workhouse ; that he is at the point of beggary ; that he has really not a sixpence he can call his own. Never having done a stroke of genuine work during the whole period of his existence, he has not learnt the real value of his money, or, in fact, anything like its value, and without being exactly extravagant, he manages to fritter his means away, and to get for his sovereign only as much as ordinary people, with their wits about them, would obtain for half that sum. A pound to him is simply twenty shillings ; it is not the representative of so much brain labour, so much anxiety, so much head-ache, so many hours in a close, fusty room, so much panting for fresh air, so much forced patience, so much pleasure foregone, or postponed, perhaps indefinitely. Practically, therefore, it loses half its power. It is spent carelessly, it tells no story, it carries no moral. As the common people say, it is thrown aside without being looked at. And a man who is in the habit of spending money carelessly cannot lay it out to its full advantage even when he tries.

Your younger son, too, not only has limited means, but he has often very queer notions of poverty. Destitution with him simply means that he has expensive tastes which he cannot gratify ; that, in nursery language, he wants the moon or the top brick off the chimney. You offer the spoilt child metaphorical bread and marmalade, and he throws it aside in a pet. Plum cake has palled on his too-refined palate ; his longing can only be gratified in the seventh heaven. He has tasted the pleasures, such as they are, of an exalted sphere, and the first bite of the Dead Sea fruit has spoilt his taste for anything more homely. It has never struck him that there are little people by the thousand who would be only too thankful for the bread that he has tossed aside, even with the jam off.

I am really afraid your well-to-do younger son is often a terribly selfish fellow.

Sometimes he developes into an ardent Radical, and has a savage delight in pulling people down to the dust, but no wish to drag folk up to anything like his own evel. This is especially likely to be the case when the elder brother matures into a ripe middle age. Then of what a philanthropic turn of mind does the disappointed rival profess himself. He points to that indolent, that wasteful scamp who neglects his opportunities, and shows such an utter disregard for the responsibilities of his position. How differently everything would be managed were *he* to be entrusted with the reins of government. Wastes would be improved into smiling valleys, cottages would be built, schools erected, churches restored. Really the younger brother is sometimes so edifying in his conversation that one is apt to fancy that

he is holding out inducements to Providence to give him a chance of proving what a change for the better it would be to substitute the expectant heir for the tried and ungrateful possessor.

But, for all his rose-tinted talk, the younger son is usually a man of embittered temper and contracted sympathies. He is too full of his own grievances to listen to anyone else. He it is who, while loud in promises for the future, declines, point-blank, to contribute to charities, of any sort, in the present. He is quite indignant that anyone should expect aid from a man of such extremely limited means—from one who is himself in need of assistance. He it is who can always find it in his heart to wave off a beggar, on a cold winter's night, to the workhouse. He it is who curses the sentimentalism of the age, and is especially severe on what he calls the maudlin and sensational tendencies of the Press. He would have all tramps and vagrom men put in the stocks, and all felons branded. He flatters himself that he is especially clever in dealing with Bohemians of all sorts, and writes letters to the *Times* that make tender-hearted people shudder. He is a man of an iron heel. He has a grudge against society, and will not stand any nonsense. He is an advocate for the lash, for the stoneyard, and for shot-drill. He has no pity for anyone but himself, and his own grievances fairly bring the tears into his own eyes. He hates the world, but would be puzzled to tell the reason why. He talks about the hollowness of fashionable society, and forgets that it is the fact of his exclusion from high life that has made him the unhappy being he is.

Sometimes he is a poet, a painter, or a novelist. Of course he never really works, not being obliged to, and equally of course he can never find a publisher, or is malignantly excluded from the Academy. Then what a theme he has in the jealousy of the powers that be. After another trial or two he throws pen and pencil aside in disgust, and is a moody discontented grumbler for the rest of his life.

A common delusion of your thoroughly idle younger son is that he alone bears the heat and burden of the day, society in general being abominably idle. He is always talking of the laziness of the lower orders, and sets his servants to do jobs that strike a man who has used his limbs and knows the extent of their power with pity and amazement. He is quite surprised that his female domestics decline to perform acrobatic feats, and to risk their necks by cleaning the outside of the third-floor windows. He gets himself, and everything that he meddles with, into utter confusion, and then tells you how desperately hard he has been at work, and how fatigued he is after his extraordinary exertions. He can never apply himself regularly to anything. He dabs on his colours, or



scribbles at his comedy, by fits and starts. He is always on the look-out for an inspiration that never comes. He flounders hopelessly in the mud, and blames everybody and everything but his own laziness and incompetency.

I have fully made up my mind that half your disappointed men of genius must be younger sons. At all events they are persons of fair means, and of a respectable position in society. Thus much is clear from the internal evidence of their writings. These men are full of bitterness, full of disappointment, but always about the merest trifles. Sometimes they are cynical and malignant for no reason at all that can be discovered, except that they have a good deal of spare time on their hands. Your aggrieved poet has seldom much feeling for the woes of commonplace humanity. No person, indeed, is so utterly deaf to the cries of those who are really distressed. Mere physical suffering he treats with amusing contempt—with a contempt that shows how free his own life must have been from any but sentimental afflictions. What are the troubles of the starving costermonger—of the poor woman whose existence is one long martyrdom to cancer—in the eyes of a man of exalted aspirations, of finely-wrought sensibilities? A woe, commonplace and disgusting, perhaps a trifle ludicrous, but certainly not of a sufficiently lofty nature to be dwelt upon and lamented in rhyme.

Next to the younger son, perhaps the most inveterate of grumblers is the highly intelligent operative, who works with one hand only, does as little work for high wages as he possibly can, and is quite prepared to run the risk of ruining himself and every one belonging to him for the sake of threepence extra a week to be muddled away in drink. Your man of unoccupied mind must have a grievance, and, if there be nothing more substantial to trouble him, it is a very good thing if he can be utterly miserable, because he has not got a vote—a vote, by the bye, that he would be afraid to use, unless, as he tells you, he could have the privilege of recording it in secret.

But here I am touching on dangerous ground. Politics are not my province: besides, I have wandered far away from younger sons. I thank my readers for their indulgence, and disappear for a month to come with a comprehensive bow.]

## THE FIRST ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL.

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NICÆA, A.D. 325.

WHEN first the fact was announced that the Pope had determined to summon a Council to Rome, for the purpose of deciding the great question of Infallibility, much interest was aroused in the minds of the thinking public. We had been so long without a great sensation, unless a paltry murder or a railway collision could be deemed one, that we longed for something out of the common, to rouse us from our apathy. It seemed for a time as though Rome, the “Niobe of nations,” were going to smile through her tears, and throw off the weeds in which she had been bewailing her lost greatness, and appear once more as the mistress of popular opinion.

In every paper the prospects of the so-called “Œcumenical Council” were discussed, and at every dinner-table the topic of the time held its own gallantly with the ordinary sensation matters. People laughed when they read how that a well-known Scotch divine of great pulpit notoriety had challenged the descendant of St. Peter and the Vicar of Christ to public discussion on the point of his own Infallibility, and how that the challenged one had quietly sent back for answer a decided negative, adding thereto his private conviction that if the daring Protestant did come to Rome, he might not find his way out of the City again, except in the shape of ashes. And people read with growing wonder and perplexity the various dogmas which were to form the *pagulum* of discussion at St. Peter’s and felt more than half inclined to admire the bold clarion note of defiance which Ffoulkes and Döllinger sounded in opposition to the Infallibility of their spiritual head.

Forthwith were despatched to Rome special correspondents, quick of eye, cunning of pen, endowed with the rare virtue of ubiquity, who sent us strange tales of the doings at the Eternal City. From them we learnt that a great dispute had arisen at the very threshold of the debate, and caused many reverend Fathers to withdraw themselves in a most undignified rage. And that a very cold and bitter wind had helped

Death to withdraw many aged pillars of the Church, in a hurried, if not undignified manner. Writers who had not given ecclesiastical history a thought before, suddenly came out as authorities on the grant of Constantine, and the Councils of Trent and Constance, and the power of the Keys. Others took a lighter vein, and amused us with descriptions of the gorgeous ceremony at St. Peter's, and the old Fathers with their umbrellas tripping home in the wet, catching *en route* tremendous colds; of the run with the fox-hounds, on the Campagna; of visits to the artists' quarter, and genial hours spent with the long-haired, smoke-scented Bohemians who sip coffee and play at dominoes at the Café Grece; of the irrepressible Yankee, who testified his approval of the Pope's procession by a stentorian Hip! hip! hurrah! and of the handsome Irish priest fresh from Maynooth, who hearing as he passed in the long rank of celebrities his praises sounded by an English girl, who little recked that he was aught but Italian, acknowledged the compliment in genuine Milesian brogue, "Thank ye for the compliment."

The Council, with its light and sober shade, was the talk of the time, and though people understood very little indeed about the purpose for which it had been convened, or the manner in which it dragged its slow length along, they treated it as the newest thing out, and waded through the long letters from the scene of action with commendable perseverance. But by this time the popular interest in the Council has begun sensibly to abate. We live in such an age of sensation, that too much time must not be devoted to the strangest thing on earth, lest a stranger event happen and so we miss it. Amongst most people the terrible scandal which occupied the Divorce Court for more than a week, and caused Paterfamilias to hide away the *Times* from his daughter's eyes, as though that respectable print contained a comedy of Dryden, or a novel of the ingenious Mrs. Aphra Behn, and which evoked from Radicals a howl of exultation, and from good people a wish that it had been strangled at its birth—this dreadful sensation for a time completely put the Council out of court, and probably, ere this article sees the light, another still more terrible scandal will have arisen; for the people of our day are like the daughters of the horse-leech in the matter of curiosity, and cry "Give, give."

With this slight preface, which has nothing to do with the matter on hand, let me proceed to the event which I have taken up my quill for a few minutes to illustrate:—The First Œcumenical Council; why it was held; who were the actors in it; and what were the results of its deliberations. And in the first place, I should feel inclined to question whether one in ten of the ordinary readers of *St. James'* have ever troubled their heads to inquire what the



Nicene Council was, or whether it was held at Nice or Nicæa; or whether its results possess the slightest interest with reference to us. And yet that Council was one of the most important events to us, and is, moreover, an event which can but happen once in the history of the world. I question, too, whether one out of ten amongst the ordinary worshippers at church, when they formally say or sing the Creed called the Nicene, ever trouble their heads to inquire why it was so called, and who were the compilers of it. And yet the formation of that Creed was one of vital consequence in the history of Christianity, and each sentence was fought for, and argued out and disputed, just as much as an important bill is at the present day, amongst the Commons in Parliament assembled.

I may be pardoned, therefore, for bringing this bygone scene before my readers' attention, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years, and for trying in my poor way to clothe the skeleton of a past age with flesh and blood. The scholar, when he stumbles on these pages, may pass them over in derision. The philosopher may shrug his shoulders in contempt; for I shall neither attempt to give the one new facts, nor the other novel views. My task will be simply by the aid of Dean Milman's "Early Christianity," and Dean Stanley's incomparable "History of the Council," to afford a little information to such as may feel inclined to read a magazine article on a subject, when they have neither leisure nor inclination to study a large volume. As to my authorities, one word is sufficient. To read Milman's account, is to behold the Council in a grand panorama where, though detail may be neglected, the general effect is magnificent. To read Stanley's, is to see it in a photograph; every minute occurrence brought into a strong light; every character drawn to the life. And of both writers it may justly be said, as it was of poor Goldsmith, in his epitaph, "*Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.*"

It will be necessary to take just one passing glance at the state of the world and religions at the time when this First General Council was convened, that its history and purpose may be fully understood. A more critical period the world had never seen before, and will never see again. In the religious world a slowly-dying Paganism and a quickly-spreading Christianity were fighting for the mastery. The battle had been long and desperate. The beautiful system which had made Rome the imperial mistress of nations, which embraced all nature and art and philosophy in its protecting arms; which had fostered scholars like Socrates and Plato; orators like Demosthenes and Cicero; poets like Homer and Horace, sculptors and painters like Phidias, Praxiteles and Apelles; which had taken a fast hold on the popular prejudices and the domestic ties of a wonderful people,—a system of religion like this

was not likely to die without a hard and bitter struggle. That Galilæan, to whom forty years after, Julian, as he lay a-dying in Peria, assigned with his last breath the palm of victory over Paganism, did not win that victory easily or quickly. Though "Galilæan, Thou hast conquered," was the death song of the Pagan religion, the time had not come to sing it when the first senate of Christendom was assembling on the plain of Bithynia, in the summer of 325.

The beautiful pantheism which Coleridge loved so,—which elevated every domestic affection into a household god, and filled mountain, and river, and wood with laughing nymph and shaggy satyr, took a very firm hold on the inner affections of the Greek and Roman. And for a very long time after the so-called introduction of Christianity it was but a mixture of Jupiter and Christ. The philosophy of a Paul and of a Plato struggled for the mastery in the minds of men. This was the religious state of the world when Constantine, its sole master, sent out his invitation to the bishops to meet at Nicæa.

With its civil condition this article has not so much to do. It may suffice to say, that the power of the West was about to be broken, and the star of Rome to set for ever in the building of Constantinople. The civil and religious history of the world was about to centre in that gorgeous city which was rising as in a vision upon the straits of the Bosphorus. Rome having played her part of Imperial Beauty, must now shortly turn her face to the wall and die, or sink at least into silence till the power of the Popes shall again call her into being—the shadow of her mighty self.

The mention of the second Rome—the Mistress-City of the East, naturally brings before our notice the figure of its founder, who was at that time the master of the whole Roman world, and had in two terrible battles decided the fate of nations—Constantine. He is a man whose name is always coupled with the appellation "Great." Just as one naturally says, Peter the Great, Alexander the Great, we assign the same epithet, though perhaps not with the same reason, to the Emperor of the East and West. Great in the sense that Alexander and Cæsar were Constantine was not; he must be ranked with Philip, and Augustus, and Charlemagne, and Louis XIV., amongst the second great men of history. He had not the conquering force and irresistible impulse of Alexander; his was neither the perfect strategy which made Julius Cæsar the greatest commander, nor the burning, headlong genius that produced Martin Luther the greatest Reformer. It was his position and the manifold advantages conferred upon him by external circumstances, which made Constantine great. So in the

present day, it is not the man born in the purple and accustomed to the sceptre as a toy, that desires to be truly called great, but he who, born to none of these things, through the innate grandeur of his mind “breasts his birth’s invidious bar,” strikes out a track for himself, and pursues that track, as it widens and grows ever brighter before him, till at last he stands before the world in a halo of renown—a hero, a mighty man, and a great one.

Of Constantine’s personal appearance and character I shall speak anon. At present there is one important part of his life, which in its relation to Christianity and to the Council of Nicæa, is of paramount weight,—his conversion. Upon this disputed point the philosopher and wit have exercised their ingenuity for years. The bitter sneer of Gibbon; the playful flippancy of Jortin; the childish credulity of Eusebius;—all have been brought to bear on it, for and against.

“The conversion of Constantine,” says Dean Stanley, “is one of the great landmarks of ecclesiastical history. No conversion of such magnitude had occurred since the apostolic age. None such occurred again till the baptism of the several founders of the Teutonic and Slavonic kingdoms. Most of my readers will have heard the story which sounds like a later echo of the scene on the road for Damascus, when the Gentile apostle heard the voice of Jesus, and which so many writers have tried to explain away on natural grounds. On the march to Rome to meet his rival Maxentius in a battle which was to decide the fate of both, the Emperor was plunged one day in deep thought, speculating as to whether the Christian religion were not after all the most useful one for him. He was no fanatical pagan; his heart-strings were not bound up with temple and altar, and sacred groves; he cared not which religion was right, provided that it helped him. Taking refuge in prayer to the Sovereign, being Pater Opt. Max., on a sudden he saw in the noon-day sky a phantom cross with the words *Εν τούτῳ νικᾷ*. (In this conquer), and in a dream the following night there appeared before his eyes the figure of Christ bearing the cross-shaped standard, the famous *Labarum*; with this going before his armies, victory would be his. After consultation with his nobles he adopted the standard, instead of the Roman eagles, and with it the Christian faith; nor had he long to wait for the test of the Power of the Cross. In the terrible conflict on the Milvian Bridge, one of the few battles that have decided the fate of the church, no less than of the world, the new standard triumphed over the world-famed eagles, and the first great blow was struck at Paganism. The Christian now became the acknowledged, the state religion; but it must not therefore be supposed that all Pagan superstition was obliterated. In Constantine’s



mind there was a wonderful jumble of old superstition and new creeds, just the same as there was in Elizabeth's, when Protestantism grew out of Popery. The worship, not only of the virgin Queen, but that of a great many of her counsellors was a mixture of the two beliefs, with a bias towards the latter. So with Constantine, Christ was hopelessly confused with Pan and Apollo; the labours of Hercules were engraven on the chair of St. Peter; the Jordan was called a river-god in the baptistery of Ravenna. But although the mixture of Paganism and Christianity in Constantine's mind was so great that many refused to look upon him as a Christian at all, he must still be accredited with the manifest design of pushing on the new cause. His "Edict of Toleration," published shortly after his conversion, enjoined the observance of the sabbath, public prayer in the army, the emancipation of slaves, and what was more to the purpose still, the abolition of public shows and gladiatorial games. These last were the strongest links that bound the Roman to his gods. "*Parem et Circense*," was the cry of the fourth century Roman, as "*Pan y toros*," is that of the modern Spaniard. The games once done away with, the old devotion to the gods melted away. This then is the man upon whom devolves the duty of summoning the first Council. The consecrated Emperor of the world, the head of the church, the bishop of bishops."

Let us now turn to the Council itself. At the time when Constantine thought fit to summon it the whole Christian world was rent in twain by a faction of the most determined character, and the great point of dispute was the Divinity of the Son, and his position in the Holy Trinity. On the one side the Arians, who followed Arius the presbyter of Alexandria, declared that though the Son was equal to the Father in position, yet there "was a time when he was not;" that far back, even before time was, the Father had an existence without the Son—a mere verbal quibble as it seems now, yet one that divided the Christian world and created the bitterest hostility. It is well defined by Stanley thus: "It was the excess of dogmatism, founded upon the most abstract words, in the most abstract region of human thought."

In an article which aims at pleasing more than instructing, it would be an insult to the reader, perplexed as he may be with the modern dogma of Infallibility, to confuse him with the deeper and finer shades of the Arian doctrine. Its great mischief was that it gave rise to what Constantine laboured to destroy, polytheism and pantheism, and if abused led to the darker and more superstitious fancies of Mani and his school. This was one doctrine which the Council had to decide; another was the fitting time at which to keep the Easter festival; and another the

celibacy of the clergy. Even in those days, woman played her part, and had her share, even as she ever loveth to have, in the discussions of the church.

Clerical celibacy "that dreadful heresy," as the mother of many daughters calls it, seems to have created as much scandal in the early days of Christianity as in more modern times, though the monks were not allowed in the fourth, as they were in the fourteenth century, to keep those *focariæ*, or lady-housekeepers, whose failings excited the indignation and employed the pens of Chaucer and "Piers Plowman."

In this *nil admirari* age it is well nigh impossible to understand the excitement and interest which the Trinitarian controversy aroused amongst all classes. "Tailors, millers, and travellers," says Stanley, "sang the disputed doctrines at their occupations, or on their journeys. Ask a man, how many oboli? he dogmatizes on generated and ungenerated beings. Inquire the price of bread and you are told, 'The Son is subordinate to the Father.' Ask if the bath is ready, and you are told 'the Son arose out of nothing.' Fancy a couple of London cabmen, of the present day, disputing on the thirty-nine articles, and the doctrine of Free Grace! Such then was the state of the religious world when the Council met at Nicæa, of which place a brief description must here be given.

Nicæa, the city of the victory, the second capital of Bithynia, was a large and flourishing town, at present called Is-nik (*εἰς Νίκαιαν*) situated at the bottom of one of the wooded mountain ranges of Bithynia, and bordering on the Oceanian Lake. It was chosen as the scene of the council just for the same reason as Trent, Pisa, and Constance—its central position, and the easy means of access which it afforded to the various bishops who were coming from east and west. It was, moreover, a healthy place, although two bishops died during the Council. The date of the meeting varies between May 20 to May 29; June 14 and June 19. No sooner had the letter of Constantine been despatched, than hundreds of bishops hastened to obey the summons. The hush of expectation became intense. Once and for all, the great question was to be decided, and the champions of Trinitarianism began to look well to their polemical armour, and to sharpen their weapons of debate. Means of transit were provided for the travellers, and so great was their haste that the relays of post-horses were knocked up in all directions. Each day brought fresh crowds in carriages from the mainland, in vessels across the lake, to take their part in the great debate; and when, at last, to the number of 2000, they assembled in the great market-place of Nicæa there was such a wonderful variety of dress and complexion, such an as-

tounding mixture of dialects, as to make the meeting a scene of unparalleled confusion. The crowd was like a great particoloured garment, ever shifting like a kaleidoscope. Side by side with the hoary-headed bishop, clad in all the gorgeous panoply of his office, stood the plainly dressed, beardless deacon, just entering upon his ministry. The smooth-spoken Italian looked with contempt upon the Coptic hermit with his barbarous *patois*, and the Gothic deputation with his long, fair hair stared with wonder at the Arian from Africa, with his coal-black complexion and thick lips. There were two men, though, upon whom the eyes of all the assembled bishops were fixed; the champions of their respective causes, the one so old that he looked more fit for the grave than the council-hall, the other so youthful that his hope must be a forlorn one. And the name of the old man "upon whom was the shadow of death" was Arius, the arch heretic of Alexandria, and the name of the young, quiet-faced, insignificant deacon was Athanasius, the champion of the Trinity; the man who dealt the death-blow to Arianism, the royal-hearted defender of the faith, whose after life fills a large page in the annals of the church, and the originator of that creed which we read very frequently in church at the present day.

Surrounding these were a varied host of minor deputies from all parts of the world, eager for the commencement of the debate, ready to pin their faith to the uttermost on the champion's doctrines. To name even the most celebrated would be a work of time, but there were a few who must not be passed over in silence. Hosius of Cordova, bishop of the most western church, must be allowed a word here, as it was mainly through his influence that the Emperor convened the assembly, while with that Emperor's after life he had much to do. And as powerful in the east as Hosius in the west was Eusebius of Cæsarea, clerk of the Imperial closet, the confessor of Constantine. He it is to whom we are indebted for the History of the Council. He played at Nicæa the same part as Sarpi at Trent. From the far distant church of the Nile came the desert hermits Potamnius and Paphnutus, each bearing marks of the late frightful persecution, one with his eye dug out, the other limping from a hamstrung leg. Paphnutus we shall meet hereafter, as the foeman of clerical celibacy. And, besides these, came a large multitude of inferior bishops, James of Nisibis, who was the privileged wag of the company, and lived upon herbs and cold water, and the fame of some curious practical jokes; Spiridion, of Cyprus, a thorough type of the "*Græculus*" in Juvenal's days, cunning, witty, and unprincipled; and, lastly, Theophilus, the Goth, from the extremest north, half-Christian, half-heathen, as ready to worship Odin as the white Christ.



This was the mingled company, then, that on the 14th of June, 1325, awaited in silence and awe the coming of the great Emperor. For the first time church and state were to meet face to face. It was a triumphant as well as a bitter moment for the Church. Triumphant, because she no longer felt herself despised and persecuted; bitter, from the forebodings of Imperial rule. At the upper end of the hall of meeting was placed a small throne, richly gilt, and on each side were ranged benches for the eager crowd of combatants. Amidst deep silence the Emperor entered, heralded by a procession of court officers and soldiers of the guard, and marched up to the throne of state, on which, at a sign from the bishops, he seated himself.

Just one glance at the personal appearance of the Emperor. Stanley thus describes him:—"His towering stature, his handsome features, his broad shoulders, were worthy of his grand position. There was a brightness in his look, and a mingled fierceness and gentleness in his lion-like eye. His long hair, false or real" (for *credite posteri!* Emperors wore false hair in those days), "was crowned with the imperial diadem of pearls. his purple robe blazed with precious stones, and gold embroidery. He was shod in the scarlet shoes, now perpetuated in Popes and cardinals."

On one side of the throne stood Eusebius, on the other Hosius, the prelates of the east and west. As Constantine cast his eyes over the vast crowd of men who had come to plead their cause before him, a smile of exultation and a flush of proud pleasure overspread his face. It was a solemn moment for him, and for the Church—for the new religion and its imperial convert. A hymn of praise was chanted, and then Constantine opened the proceedings with a brief harangue. He rejoiced to see the meeting assembled; he trusted that harmony of opinion would characterize its debates; and he called upon the chief men on both sides of the question to remove all grounds of difference, and to wind up by laws of peace every link of controversy. As if in ridicule of this speech no sooner had its last words died away, than the pent-up excitement of the disputants burst forth with as much resistless vehemence as a swollen winter torrent. From this moment the proceedings of the Council became involved in hopeless confusion. It was a field of battle, the Council Hall, in which each bishop fought singly and in the dark. Bitter dislike found vent in personal invective. Arius was called mad rhymester because he had written a volume of satirical poetry, called "*Thalia*." His enemies said that he was moon-struck, and a dancing Dervish. Whilst the fierce struggle was at its height, Arius and his party published their creed, alleging that the Son was created after the Father. Then the anger of the rival Atha-

nasians became uncontrollable; the offending creed was torn into fragments, and its composer was violently, and at the risk of his life, hurried from the assembly.

Not unnaturally, the Christian world asked with Pilate "what is truth?" and waiting for the answer, had the satisfaction of receiving it soon, from the hands of Bishop Eusebius, in the shape of a creed, which was the basis of the present Nicene Creed. In this formula the present article on the procession of the Holy Ghost, and on the Holy Catholic church, were not included; and the tone of the whole confession was about as damnatory as the Athanasian, to which Doctor Arnold could never bring himself to say Amen.

No sooner had their form of belief been promulgated than a fresh dispute broke out amongst the eager debaters, concerning the substance of the Son; some affirming that He was the same substance as the Father (*ὁμοουσιος*), others that He was merely similar in substance (*ὁμοιούσιος*), the argument thus, as says Gibbon, depending upon a quibble about one letter. At length, however, the creed was drawn out, the disputed clause settled, and the signatures affixed, and thus, brought forth in dissension, and cradled in verbal quibbling, the creed of Nicæa became that of the world. Nothing in after years was allowed to weaken its power; subsequent councils merely added a trifling clause or two, which affected not the great question of the Trinity, and not only in English, but in the Russian and Greek churches this form of creed dating from the summer of 325, is said and chanted as an unalterable confession of faith by thousands. Arius, the heretic, was banished, and the triumph of the deacon Athanasius complete, though ever and anon the defeated champion of heresy started up afresh with his strange, wild doctrines, till a terrible death stilled his voice for ever.

The two remaining questions to be settled were, the date of Easter and the celibacy of the clergy. The first was a very old point of dispute, as to whether the Paschal Feast should be celebrated on the fourteenth day of Nisan, or on the Sunday following. The Catholic Church was split up into minute factions, each having its own arguments for the proper date. But the Emperor's mandate at this Council laid down the present or Christian style for the observance of the glad feast, and the Church, with some exceptions, obeyed. The other question is one that has affected the welfare of the Church and the morals of her clergy from time immemorial. A proposition was brought forward in the Council, that not only should celibacy be enjoined upon all unmarried priests, but that the married ones should at once separate themselves from their wives. The old lame hermit,

Paphnutus, seems to have been conjugally fortunate, for he met the order with a howl of rage. The thing must not be thought of: marriage was honourable, and marriage prevented many evils. He, at all events, was determined to keep his wife, come what might. It would be interesting had we time to follow out the celibacy question, and trace its evil effects through the middle ages, and there is one remark of plain old Latimer's I would quote here an' I dared, which, much as it may have pleased the not over decorous Elizabeth, will scarcely beseem the pages of *St. James'*. What the state of clerical morality was, and how great the evils of so-called celibacy in the middle ages, a careful perusal of the *Decamerone*, Chaucer's *Tales*, and *Piers Plowman's* *Vision* will tell us, and a fable attributed to Walter Mapes, mentioned by Hallam in the "Middle Ages," will throw a flood of not over cleanly intelligence upon the condition of the monasteries. At Nicæa, however, the indignation of the married hermit gained the day, and the clergy were allowed to retain their wives and to marry.

Besides settling these three great and vital questions, the Council edited a number of canons on church discipline and conduct, into which space forbids our going more particularly. The Council was now drawing to a close, the fire of bitter dispute, which had blazed so brightly, was fast smouldering into ashes; Nicæa, from being the scene of the most important meeting in the world's history, was preparing to assume its every-day aspect; the good bishops were packing up to return once more to their distant dioceses (whither possibly they were as unwilling to return as our colonial bishops in the present day); and the Emperor dissolved the meeting with a joke and a farewell speech. The joke was at the expense of a hard-headed old dissenter, one Acesius, who strove to narrow the gate of salvation so that few, indeed, could enter in. "Ho! ho! Acesius," laughed Constantine, "plant a ladder, and climb up into heaven by yourself." The speech was pious and liberal. Then he thanked the fathers for their attendance, and hoped they would find their way safely home. Thus ended the first Œcumenical Council, and though centuries roll between it and the present one, the effects and the teaching of that council will never cease to be felt, so long as the world stands.



## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

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### THE PROLOGUE.

ON a dreary November evening in the year 1842 Sir George Lumley was seated alone in the dining-room of Lumley Hall. The room had an air of massive comfort about it which agreed well with the position it occupied in the house of which it was not the least important apartment. The richly-carved sideboard glittered with silver-plate, whilst chairs and tables and other articles of furniture all wore that air of solidity which is hardly to be seen in the modern dining-room in these days of French and Belgian upholstery. Nobody who found himself set down in this room, with its three bay-windows, its richly-painted walls, and its soft Turkey carpet, could doubt that he was in one of those great country houses of which England had in those days, at least, considerably more reason to be proud than of the "cottage homes" which, according to the poetess, ought to be her boast. Nor could any one who examined the choice paintings, chiefly from the easels of French and Flemish artists, which were hung round the apartment, doubt that its owner was the possessor alike of wealth and of taste.

The owner himself, however, did not seem at that moment to be conscious of the evidences of comfort and refinement, which surrounded him. On the table stood choice wines and fruit in abundance, but his back was turned upon the untasted dessert, and, resting in a large arm-chair at one side of the wide fire-place, he sat so motionless that it might have been supposed that he was indulging in the luxury of an after-dinner nap.

Apparently the well-bred footman who softly entered the room was of this opinion, for, after glancing towards his master, he retreated with noiseless step towards the door. Instantly a thin, worn face was raised from the white hands in which it had been buried up to that moment, and an irritable voice said—

"What do you want, Saunders?"

"I beg pardon, sir; but Mrs. Prudhoe wished to know if she might be permitted to speak to you?"

"Of course she might; send her in at once," and as he uttered these words, Sir George Lumley turned his back upon the servant,

and, fixing his eyes upon the brisk fire in the grate, stared gloomily into the blazing mass of coal.

A man whose health was not good, who had a delicate, refined face, a thin, shrunk body, and whose age might be forty, or thereabouts—these were the impressions which a visitor would have formed concerning Sir George Lumley had he seen him as he sat in his dining room that evening. He could not have discovered, however, from a mere casual inspection that the strangely worn and irritable expression upon the features was not an habitual one, but was one which could only be seen upon the face when its owner was specially tired or perplexed.

No one could mistake the vocation of the woman who presently entered the room, and, with a deep curtesy to the baronet, began to speak in tones in which a desire to be genteelly unprovincial was painfully conspicuous. Moving in a much higher sphere than that adorned by Mrs. Gamp, the lady who now made her appearance was yet a member of the same honourable profession.

“I hope you’ll excuse my intruding of myself in this manner, Sir George; but I took the liberty of coming down in order that I might intimate to you that her ladyship’s time is very near. Sir David desires his compliments to you, and he wishes me to tell you so.”

Mrs. Prudhoe was doubtless accustomed to convey tidings of good fortune (of this description) to many husbands, and she was therefore aware that all were not affected in the same manner by the news she bore. She was hardly prepared, however, to see the ghastly pallor which even as she spoke spread itself over the face of the man she was addressing. Starting from his chair, and exhibiting considerably more discomposure of manner than husbands in high life ordinarily display under such circumstances, Sir George Lumley gasped rather than uttered the words—

“Do you mean to tell me Lady Lumley is near her confinement?”

“Yes, Sir George; the poor lady is certainly very near it.”

“Good God! I thought Goodman said this alarm was premature. Is it hopeless—I mean, is he certain, woman, that—that—”

“He desired his respects to you, Sir George, at least his compliments, as I have already said,” interposed Mrs. Prudhoe, rather nettled at the doubt cast by the baronet upon her own experience, “and he certainly thinks it’s very near.” And, having said this, Mrs. Prudhoe dropped another profound curtesy, and left the room.

Sir George Lumley performed the decidedly melodramatic action of striking his narrow forehead—which was scored at that moment by half-a-dozen upright furrows—with his thin hand, as

the nurse took her departure, and then he sank into his chair again with a face the abject woe of which would have been somewhat startling to any one who could have perceived it. For several minutes he remained silent and motionless, staring into the fire with eyes which seemed to see in the glowing embers forms as terrible as those which Dante looked on in his visions. There was something strangely moving in the contrast which the shrunk, horror-stricken man, cowering by himself in that chair, presented to the room in which he sat, with its substantial comforts, its countless evidences of luxury and taste. Suddenly he started up, and drawing from an inner pocket of his dress coat a little morocco case, he took from this case a letter written upon thin foreign note-paper, and the envelope of which bore the Paris post-mark. The letter, which was a long one, had evidently been read many times, for, passing over two closely-written pages, the eyes of the baronet found a particular passage upon which they fixed themselves. These were the words which they saw, but which Sir George Lumley's mind at that moment, in the supreme agony through which it was passing, hardly comprehended:—

“Do not delay. Do not wait even for my return to England. As I have already said, I shall be detained here for some days longer, and those days may make all the difference in this case between security and what I can hardly call less than ruin. Act at once, my dear Lumley. I know how prone you are to put off till to-morrow that which you ought to do to-day. For heaven's sake, for your wife's sake, for the sake of your unborn child, don't do it in this case. Remember all that depends upon your prompt action, and let no thought of the gossip which must of course follow the step you are bound to take deter you. Rather feel thankful that the truth has been made known in sufficient time to enable you to avert the great calamity which would have befallen your house had you continued in ignorance much longer.”

Returning the letter to its resting-place with a prolonged sigh, Sir George Lumley poured out for himself a glass of Cognac, and drained it at a draught; then once more he relapsed into the old attitude of despairing thought. He was not allowed to remain long undisturbed, however. A smart nursery-governess entered the room, leading by the hand a beautiful boy of seven. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the baronet's worn and pallid face and that of the boy, which shone with intelligence and the happy innocence of childhood. Soft blue eyes, curling brown hair, and dimpled chin, gave to the lad's face that infantile loveliness which painters have so often tried to portray



in pictures of a cherub ; and it was with a smile of easy confidence that the child advanced towards the chair where the man was seated. But the latter found no solace from his cares in the boy's appearance. Those cares seemed rather to weigh more heavily upon him in the presence of the child. There was no answering smile on his face to that with which he was greeted ; there was only a darker shade upon the brow than had been seen there before, and a quick, angry reprimand to the nurse—

“ Why did you bring the boy here ? Take him away.”

It might almost have seemed that Sir George Lumley was unable to meet the gaze of the innocent boy. He turned away from him with something between a curse and a groan, and, hiding his face in his hands, did not look up again until the child and his nurse had disappeared ; then he rose, and with incoherent mutterings and broken sighs, paced the floor of the dining-room.

Meanwhile, in another room of Lumley Hall, a different scene was being witnessed. There the lady of the house, the wife of the man whom we have been watching, was bearing her special share in the first curse. A long, long time seemed to have elapsed to the husband in the room below before the suspense which he was enduring was changed to certainty. At length, however, Mrs. Prudhoe once more made her appearance, without, upon this occasion, sending Saunders, as her ambassador, to solicit an interview, and, with a smile of beaming satisfaction, announced to the baronet that he was the happy father of a son and heir.

“ God help the child—and me !” were the words with which Sir George Lumley received the tidings.

It was midnight when this news was brought to the dining-room of Lumley Hall ; but for full two hours longer the lamps continued to burn in that luxurious apartment, and a man, bowed with some terrible weight of woe, continued to wander restlessly round it, like some hunted animal that has found a temporary hiding-place, but which knows that ere long it must venture forth again within scent of the pack.

At the very dead of night, when Sir George Lumley, worn out at last, had quietly stolen away to his bed-chamber to seek oblivion in sleep, the unexpected sound of wheels was heard on the drive leading to the great door of the Hall ; and there was presently a summons, which effectually roused the sleepy servant who had been bidden to remain in attendance upon the nurse—Sir David Goodman, the great London surgeon, having retired to rest in a room not far distant from that in which Lady Lumley was lying. When the many bolts and chains which secured the great door had been removed, the astonished servant found herself face

to face with a tall, spare man, who, without pausing to ask permission or explain his errand, crossed the threshold and entered the hall. The girl stared, half in alarm and half in indignation, at the stranger who had so uncereemoniously intruded himself, and who now consented to give some explanation with respect to his identity and purpose.

"I am Mr. Harcourt. Sir George Lumley has been expecting me for some time. Is he at home?"

This was all that Mr. Harcourt said; but the servant was satisfied by the manner in which he spoke that he was no midnight marauder, bent upon forcing his way into the Hall with burglarious intentions. Some men have the power of impressing even the most unobservant with a sense of their superiority, or, it may be, of their trustworthiness, by a glance of the eye, or the utterance of half-a-dozen words. Travel-worn, and dusty as was the man who stood before her, even the dull and sleepy servant-maid was able to recognise in him one who was to be trusted. She led the way respectfully to the dining-room, where the fire was soon trimmed, and the lamps re-lit, and where Mr. Harcourt, throwing himself into the very chair in which Sir George Lumley had sat but a short time before, waited whilst the girl made her way to the servants' quarters, and roused the butler and the valet, whose office it was to attend the person of the Baronet.

Except that he, too, was tall of stature, there could hardly have been a greater contrast than that which the new-comer presented in appearance to the master of the house. Mr. Harcourt was really but a few years younger than Sir George Lumley, yet he looked little more than half his age. Even at this moment, weary with a long journey, the fresh, handsome face, with its lustrous brown eyes, and firm, clean cut lips, looked like the face of a man who was still in the first decade of manhood. Nor could any one who had seen the worn, weary look of the Baronet fail to contrast with it the power and energy which were unmistakably impressed upon the countenance of his friend. For Sir George Lumley and Charles Harcourt were friends. They had been thrown together in early life in the house of the same private tutor, they had passed some years together at the University, they had travelled together through Europe, and had even made—in days when such an expedition was much more seriously thought of than it is at present—a journey in company to the United States. More than this, their friendship had survived the racket of London life, and the opening of that great gulf which must ever be fixed between the idle man and the busy one. If any other proof of the closeness of the ties which bound them together were required, it might be found in the fact that both

had married, and yet that each continued to regard the other with the old warmth of friendship and affection.

One, we have said, was a busy man, the other an idle one. Sir George Lumley was a rich man, and an idle one. Charles Harcourt was not rich. He was the younger son of a country gentleman, and, like other younger sons, he had his own way to make in the world. A fortunate marriage—in a double sense of the word, for his wife was as amiable as she was wealthy—had given him, however, a great advantage in the struggle in which he, in common with so many others, was engaged. As the husband of Miss Edelston, the great Lancashire heiress, he occupied a very different position in society to that which would have been allotted to him as the younger son of Mr. Harcourt, of Scrooby Grange. But the comparative affluence to which he was thus raised had not led to his relinquishment of personal ambition, or of the pursuits upon which he had entered before his marriage; and at the time at which he is introduced to the reader he was known in the world as the rising member for a Yorkshire borough, who was already marked out for the next vacant Under-Secretaryship.

Presently Sir George's "man," sleepy and untidy, entered the dining-room, with the intimation that Sir George himself would be down directly, and having learned in answer to his inquiries that refreshment would not be unacceptable to the traveller, he condescended to do something to provide for Mr. Harcourt's wants. As he moved about the room, placing upon the dining-table such cold meats as the larders of the Hall contained, the stranger, whose arrival had been the cause of so much commotion, looking round to him from the arm-chair, said—

"How is Lady Lumley?"

"Her Ladyship, sir, is as well as can be expected," was the answer which the valet smoothly gave in the conventional phrase. Even Mr. Harcourt's firm mouth twitched, and his eyes flashed as he heard the words; but he said, with no touch of agitation in his voice or manner—

"Do you mean that Lady Lumley has been unwell?"

"Her ladyship was confined last night, sir, and both she and the baby, a fine boy, sir, are doing very well."

Mr. Harcourt's mouth closed more firmly than ever as he turned to the fire, and seizing the poker, thrust it fiercely between the bars.

Even as he did so, Sir George Lumley entered the room. A warm greeting passed between the friends, but in the presence of the servant nothing was said of the special event of the night. It almost seemed as though the Baronet were glad of the respite



which was thus afforded him ; for though there was a genuine expression of relief on his face when he greeted Mr. Harcourt, he appeared to be anything but at his ease in the first few minutes of his conversation with him. At last, however, there was no longer any pretence for detaining the man, and he was dismissed. As soon as he was gone, Mr. Harcourt said, with a grave emphasis, in which a slight touch of severity was apparent—

“ I have heard of Lady Lumley’s confinement, and I suppose I may conjecture the worst, George ? ”

There was no reply—none, at least, in words ; but, suddenly turning from his friend, the other burst into convulsive sobs.

Mr. Harcourt’s face softened wonderfully, but he continued his questions—

“ You did not take the step I advised, I suppose, and this has happened unexpectedly ? ”

There was a slight motion of the bowed head, which the questioner knew how to interpret.

For more than a minute neither spoke. Nothing was heard in the room save the tick-tick of the timepiece, and the deep sighs of the Baronet. Then Harcourt stretched out his hand, and grasping that of the other man, said—

“ My poor friend, what can I say to you now except that I sympathise with you, and with Lady Lumley, from the bottom of my heart ? ”

“ You can say more than that, Charles,” eagerly interposed the other—“ you can advise us—you can help us. Surely the case cannot be so bad as I, in my inexperience, imagine. There must be some way of escape, and you will show us that way, will you not ? ”

“ Should there be any possible hope of averting this—this ruin—I should be the first to tell you of it ; but I confess I see no such hope. You must prepare for the worst, I fear.”

“ And what do you think the worst is ? ”

“ The worst feature of your present position is, that the child whom your wife has just borne you is illegitimate.”

Little more was said between the two men at that moment, and before long they parted for the night, which was now drawing towards morning.

Sir George Lumley, we have said, was an idle man. He had done nothing particular at College, and when the death of his father called him down to Midlandshire, to take possession of the ancestral estates of the family, he was still a young man of five-and-twenty, who had just returned from a twelvemonth’s tour in the United States with his friend Charles Harcourt. The young Baronet was not very wise ; he had never shown strength of mind

or power of intellect ; he had been somewhat weak and vacillating even in the hot-blooded years of his first youth, but he had never been one of the fast men of his University, had never fallen into the hands of the Jews, or succumbed to the wiles of an English Circe. Had he been a member of the middle-class, had his father been some City clerk, who thought he had done everything for his son when he had secured for him a stool in an office in Mincing Lane, or Austen Friars, he would probably have gone through life happily and reputably—would have won golden opinions from the neighbours in Canonbury, or Islington, for the manner in which he worshipped his mother and attended to his sisters, and would in due time have made a sober love-match with some friend of one of the sisters aforesaid, and settled down for life in the counting-house in which his commercial career had commenced. He was, in fact, a quiet, domesticated lad, who would have been an ornament rather than anything else to some virtuous “sphere” in the lower ranks of the middle-classes. But Fate had been cruel enough to make him at five-and-twenty the master of an estate worth some fifteen thousand a-year, and the absolute ruler of his own destinies. His mother had died many years before he lost his father ; he had no sisters—his only near relative, in fact, was a brother, eight years younger than himself, and his sole intimate friend was his late fellow-traveller, who was now engaged in reading hard at dry law-books, and keeping his terms at Lincoln’s Inn.

So when Sir George Lumley paid his first visit to Lumley Hall as its master he found himself very lonely indeed. His brother was at Eton, and even had he been at home there would not in all probability have been much intercourse between the travelled man of five-and-twenty and the boy of seventeen. The seats of the neighbouring gentry were all at some distance from the Hall, and, moreover, his was just that indolent and retiring disposition which renders all intercourse with comparative strangers the reverse of a pleasure. So he stopped at home and spent his time in roaming about the park, and in projecting plans for the improvement of the garden with Peter Dawson, the North countryman who had come to his father’s employment as head gardener, but whose diligent services and tried integrity had been rewarded by his promotion to the post of agent for a certain portion of the Lumley estates. Sir George would gladly have left Lumley and gone back to town, had there been any inducement to draw him thither. But, in simple truth, he had at that time no place in London in which to hide his head. There was no town house attached to the Lumley property, and the young baronet had not become a member of any of the clubs. The only attraction in

London was the presence of Charles Harcourt. But Harcourt was working hard, and he had not encouraged a more than hinted proposal on the part of his friend to visit him. So Sir George Lumley remained at Lumley Hall, and for a time was very tired of himself, of the splendid mansion of which he was master, of the title he bore, and the broad estates from which he derived his income. More than once, indeed, he thought regretfully of the savage freedom of the prairies which he and Harcourt had so recently visited together, and felt inclined to try the experiment of leaving home and rank and wealth behind him, and fixing his lot, for a few years at any rate, as a hunter in the far West.

But presently there came a change over the baronet's mood. He was no longer anxious to leave England, though he was still anxious to lay down a social rank which had become almost odious to him. And the cause of this change? It is easily given. The listless youth had suddenly found a new zest in life. He had fallen in love with Phœbe Dawson, the orphan niece of his head gardener and land agent! This is not the story of Sir George Lumley's life, and we need not, therefore, dwell upon the early phases of his love. Phœbe was unquestionably pretty, and she had, moreover, derived from her North country parentage a considerable amount of what her own people called "sense." When she found that the shy lad whom she had regarded with a proper amount of reverence when he first came down to Lumley to take possession of his own, had fallen in love with her, she was wise enough and modest enough to avoid him as much as was possible. But Sir George Lumley proved an ardent lover, and he wooed pretty Phœbe with a warmth which ended by kindling a reciprocal flame within her guileless bosom. So at length it came to pass that the baronet was no longer avoided by the damsel who dwelt in her uncle's modest house on the borders of the park, and deep in the Lumley woods many a tryst between the pair was given and kept. Peter Dawson, who would as soon have thought of aspiring to the hand of a royal princess as of forwarding a match between his niece and the head of the proud house of Lumley, knew nothing of what was going on, and it would be difficult to say whether he was most flattered or astounded when one day the baronet, blushing like a girl in her teens, and stammering dreadfully, asked his consent to his marriage with Phœbe. For it had come to this. Sir George Lumley, the representative of a long line of country gentlemen who had held high rank amongst the aristocracy of Midlandshire for centuries, wished to mate with the orphan daughter of some Northumbrian cottager, who had nothing but her good looks and her virtue to recommend her to his favour. Had either of them been other than they were, the result might have



been different. Many a young man who has just entered into his patrimony has before now fallen in love, after a fashion, with the handsome figure or bright eyes or rosy cheeks of some peasant girl. But it is not often that love of this sort leads to marriage, or that the vows exchanged under forest trees or beside quiet streams, are ratified by other vows of which the Registrar-General can take cognizance. In this case, however, Sir George Lumley was either too deep in love or too honourable to meditate any wrong to Phœbe Dawson; and she herself was not one likely to sacrifice her reputation even for the glories—fascinating if transient—of a baronet's mistress. We need not, however, enquire into all the circumstances which had a share in bringing about the final result. That result came at last, in the shape of a marriage between Sir George Lumley of Lumley Hall, and Phœbe Dawson of Lumley Gate Lodge.

It was an ill-assorted match. All the probabilities were against its success; and had the man who in his infatuation would listen to no remonstrance, and would brook no opposition, but consented to pursue the history of some of the precedents which he quoted to show that he was not committing an unexampled act of folly, he might have been confronted by stories which would have disturbed even his complacent faith in the wisdom of the step he was taking. But of course Sir George Lumley did nothing of the sort, and six months after his arrival at Lumley he and Phœbe Dawson were quietly married at St. Pancras Church—for the ceremony took place in London—the only persons present being Phœbe's aunt (her uncle had sternly declined to sanction by his presence that which he professed to regard as an astounding and unnatural inversion of the established order of mundane affairs) and Charles Harcourt, who, being unable to dissuade the baronet, did not desert him at this eventful stage of his history.

Four months later the spell was dissipated, and Sir George and Lady Lumley saw their position in its true light. The one found himself tied for life to a girl, virtuous and affectionate, it is true but without one aspiration or one taste in common with himself. He could not take her into society, and though he disliked society himself, he was keenly alive to the slights which it inflicted on his plebeian wife. He could not interest her in any of his favourite pursuits; he could look to her for no sympathy in his studies, and he even failed to wean her from those early tastes which led her to concentrate all her interest in the kitchen and the poultry-yard. She, for her part, discovered, with what a pang we cannot pretend to tell, that she had no real hold upon her husband's love or esteem. In one of those moments of blind passion, to which weak and excitable natures are peculiarly subject, he had made her his

wife, but when the transient illusion passed away, the love he had given her passed with it, and she saw that she was nothing more than a burthen and an encumbrance to him. Perhaps Sir George Lumley took little pains to conceal this fact from his wife. His was not one of those lofty natures which can suffer and be strong. He winced visibly under the pressure of the chain which bound him; and though he would have shrunk from any word of positive unkindness to the woman he had married, and would no more have insulted her by a contemptuous allusion to her former station than he would have struck her with his hand, he yet could not maintain the pretence of love when the reality had departed. He became cold, absent, irritable; and an ever-growing gulf yawned between the ill-assorted pair.

Well, such things have happened in high life before to-day; and possibly at the moment at which you, reader, are perusing this veracious history, events not dissimilar are occurring, it may be under your neighbour's roof—it may be under your own. Hearts that for one blissful moment have seemed to meet, and to mingle their life-blood with each other, have fallen asunder, suddenly perhaps, or it may be more gradually, have grown cold and distant, and at length have become strangers to each other—strangers though they beat in bosoms that are found occupying the same house and sharing the same couch. But what of that? A certain amount of connubial coldness is not—as long experience shows us—quite incompatible with the enjoyment of life; and had Lady Lumley been one of the well-drilled sisterhood of Belgravia, had her early years been passed “in society,” she would have needed no mentor to teach her that there are other things besides a husband's smiles which may make life at least tolerable. But she had not enjoyed the advantages which even one season's lessons would have conferred upon her. She was a simple peasant girl, with a heart so full of love for her husband that it had room for no other passion. It seemed to her that she lived but in the light of his eyes; could find no warmth save in his protecting clasp. When, therefore, those eyes ceased to regard her with love, and she was no longer welcome to his arms, her own heart turned sick and cold, and it seemed to her that earth had now no good thing in store for her.

Many a woman of fashion would have envied her position, even at that moment; not a few titled girls, who had spent a season or two in “the marriage market of the West,” and who were beginning to feel, with a certain proud shame, the degradation of their position, would have been thankful to share the name and wealth of Sir George Lumley, and would have made no inconvenient or unreasonable demands upon his heart, would have accepted his coldness or his

kindness equally as a matter of course, equally as a part of the bargain into which they had entered. But Phœbe was made of different stuff; and for her there could be no happiness except in her husband's love, no contentment except in a humble ministering to his daily wants. When she found that his heart was passing from her, she made one or two timid efforts to regain it. When those efforts failed, she relapsed into an utterly passive state, which the observer might have been forgiven for mistaking for the indication either of despair or of indifference. In reality it was neither. Phœbe was endeavouring to make up her mind as to her duty, endeavouring to reconcile herself to the sacrifice which she had resolved to make for the sake of the man she loved; and very hard did she find the task she had set herself. But love triumphed; and one morning, instead of being greeted by his wife's loving albeit melancholy smile, the baronet found awaiting him on the breakfast-table a plaintive ill-spelt note, all smudged and tear-stained, in which she told him that she had resolved to relieve him from the encumbrance of her presence, and that she had gone away for ever. She hoped that he would be very happy, and she would always pray for him. So the letter concluded; and those closing words were the last ever addressed to Sir George Lumley by his first wife. He made search for her without success. Perhaps, had he been more anxious to recover her he might have done so. But his pursuit of her, never very ardent, soon lagged, and before long ceased altogether. Sir George Lumley, indeed, felt something akin to relief when he found that he was freed from the presence of his peasant wife; and though he was very lonely also, and fell for a time into a drooping melancholy mood, he found before long that life had, after all, not a few attractions for a baronet with a rent-roll of fifteen thousand a-year. Within twelve months of his wife's disappearance he received the announcement of her death, which had taken place at some small village in her native county. The announcement was accompanied by an official certificate of the fact, which did not seem the less valid that it described the dead woman by her maiden name. So the baronet was free again, and at liberty to retrieve the false step he had taken in the outset of life.

He went abroad, and spent a couple of years in roaming from place to place upon the continent. By one of the accidents of travel, he became acquainted at the end of that time with a retired Major in the Indian army, named Clayton. The retired Major had an only daughter, at that time a girl of seventeen. The intimacy which sprang up between Sir George and the Claytons ripened into love on his part for the Major's daughter. After twelve months of pleasant intercourse abroad, Sir George Lumley proposed for Miss Clayton, and was rejected. His rejection not



unnaturally severed the temporary connection which had sprung up between him and the young lady's father. Five years later, the Baronet, who had in course of time developed into a fashionable member of society in London, met Miss Clayton again in a Belgravian drawing-room. Her father was dead, and she was living with a distant relative. His old love returned ; after some months had passed, he proposed again, and was successful. The marriage was a happy one ; but it was not until nearly five years after their union that the event which has already been described occurred, and they were blessed with a child.

Two months before that event, however, the shadow of a great trouble fell upon Sir George Lumley's life. After the flight of his first wife, her uncle, the agent of the estate, had continued in the Baronet's service. He had never, during his niece's brief life at the Hall, presumed upon his connection with her ; he had always, indeed, as far as was possible, ignored the relationship subsisting between them ; he had not been in the secret of the girl's flight, and knew nothing of her whereabouts after she left her husband, and the tidings of her death had been communicated to him by the baronet himself. Two months before the night on which this prologue opens, however, Peter Dawson had sought an interview with Sir George Lumley, and had laid before him strong grounds for the suspicion that his first wife was living at the time of his marriage with Miss Clayton. Inquiry confirmed these suspicions. The " Phœbe Dawson " of whose death he had received a certificate, was not the girl whom he had married. She, too, was dead, but her death, it was clear, had not taken place until two years after his second marriage. He had, therefore, committed unconscious bigamy, and this second wife, who had shared his name and his life for five years, had no legal right to the position she held. Most men under such circumstances, and especially under the circumstance of Lady Lumley's condition, would at once have gone through the ceremony of re-marriage. Not so the baronet. He occupied several weeks in the inquiries he set on foot to establish the truth of the story brought to him by Peter Dawson, and when that story was established beyond the reach of doubt, he wasted many more precious days in communicating with Harcourt, who was at that time in Italy. The fact was, that he shrank with a morbid fear from the duty of communicating the truth to his wife. He loved her tenderly ; he knew her sensitive nature, and he dared not reveal to her the terrible fact that, all unconsciously though it was, the position which they had been occupying together was not that of husband and wife. He was determined to entrust to Harcourt the task of breaking the news to Lady Lumley, and of informing her of the necessity for a re-

marriage. So he waited for his friend's return from abroad—with what consequences we have seen. Lady Lumley was prematurely confined, and Charles Harcourt spoke the literal truth when he declared that her child was, in the eyes of the law, illegitimate.

A dull, sodden November morning, followed the night which had seen the almost simultaneous arrival of the "little stranger" and of Charles Harcourt at the Hall. The mist hung heavily about the trees in the park, and the faint odour of decaying leaves was wafted from the avenue even into the comfortable breakfast-room itself. It was a depressing morning, and though Sir David Goodman was ordinarily one of the most cheery of mortals, he could hardly resist the influence of the weather as, by the dim light of a bedroom lamp, he went through the melancholy operation of shaving. Sir David, however, was not disposed to allow the "blues" to take possession of him, and by the time he had visited his patient—or rather, patients—and had seen that both were progressing satisfactorily, he had worked himself into such a frame of mind that he was ready for any chance of amusement which might offer itself. And such a chance was not long in being presented to him. As the great surgeon—who had the largest head and the smallest body ever seen out of a caravan—rolled, rather than walked, across the Hall in the direction of the breakfast-room, a little boy—the child whom we saw last night for a moment in the dining-room—effected his escape from some apartment near at hand, and ran gleefully along the corridor, pursued by an angry nurse. The urchin paused for a moment in doubt when he caught sight of Sir David's comical figure; but the next instant he had seen the surgeon's face, and that was enough. He sprang towards him with the confidence of childhood, and besought his assistance in his flight from nurse in the background. Thus it happened that when the great man—whose lot it had been to pronounce sentence of death upon mortals of high and low degree far more frequently than any judge upon the bench—made his appearance in the breakfast parlour where Sir George Lumley and Mr. Harcourt were awaiting his arrival, he did so breathless, and bearing the child in triumph upon his shoulder.

"Oh! uncle," cried the boy, wild with delight, "dis funny man ran away with me from nursey—and oh! he runs so fast—so fast—though he has such little legs!"

Harcourt incontinently burst out laughing at this innocent speech, and even the worn and deeply-lined face of the baronet relaxed for a moment into a smile. Meanwhile Sir David was

recovering his breath, and apologising for his detention of the others, having accomplished which tasks to his satisfaction, and having duly reported upon the condition of Lady Lumley, his whole attention appeared to be given to the child.

"And who may this fine little fellow be, Sir George?" asked he, whilst the youngster, perched upon his knee, was already making free with his buttered roll.

"Don't be rude, Arthur; get off Sir David's knee. He is my brother's only son, Sir David. He came here two years ago, when poor Ned died, and has lived at the Hall ever since."

"Ah! then he is an orphan. I knew something of his father and mother," and the doctor's arm rested still more caressingly than before on the child's shoulder.

When the baronet spoke of the child, Harcourt turned to look at him, with a strange interest; for he knew that of which Sir David had not the slightest conception, and which even the baronet had hardly grasped, that this boy, and not the baby upstairs, in honour of whose birth the Lumley tenantry were already rejoicing, was the heir to the title and estates. As yet the baronet had scarcely taken in the full extent of the calamity which had fallen upon his house. He knew that he had brought irremediable sorrow and shame upon the woman he loved; he knew that by his own weakness, by the fatal indolence which had led to his putting off a dreaded task until he could find some one at his elbow upon whom he could rely for assistance in performing it, he had shattered the prospects of his life, the happiness of his household; but as yet he hardly grasped the truth that the most bitter fruits of the misery of which he had been the cause, were to be reaped by the babe who had just been born to him—the babe whose future, as it was seen by one of the three men seated in the breakfast-room of Lumley Hall, appeared to be so dark, so hopeless, so infinitely wretched, that if that future could have been closed for ever by the hand of death, it would have seemed a merciful dispensation of Providence. Sir George Lumley was not the first, and he will not be the last man, who by a momentary shrinking from the path of duty—by a weakness, so slight apparently as hardly to be worthy of notice—has wrecked not his own happiness only, but the happiness of unborn children—the hopes of future generations.

"And what do you propose to do, Lumley?" asked Harcourt later in the day, when Sir David had returned to town, and when something like peace had settled over the stately towers of the Hall.

"That is what I want your advice about, Harcourt. You must guide me and help me. I am horribly, shamefully weak, I



know; and I see how I alone am responsible for all the misery which has seemed to dog me like a shadow since I lost my father. Strange, is it not?"—and as he spoke the man's memory went wandering back to those early days in which he had wooed and won Phœbe Dawson under the shadow of the very trees upon whose leafless branches and gaunt gnarled trunks he was now looking—"Strange, is it not, Harcourt, that such a fatality should have pursued me since the days when I became the master of my own fortune? You know me better than any one else, Charles, and I think you will answer for the fact that my vices are not worse than the vices of other men, and that like other men I have some good points about me. And yet, look at my history for the last twenty years! I marry beneath me—make a love match, full of the purest motives, and with the idea of leading a pastoral life here, far away from the distractions of society; and within four months I have—unintentionally, as God is my witness—broken my wife's heart, and driven her away to die amongst strangers. I marry again, and am blest with the best of wives and the happiest of homes; and then Nemesis overtakes me, and I am made the innocent instrument of bringing shame upon my wife and ruin upon my new-born child. No, not innocent in this case, Harcourt. May God forgive me for the foul wrong I have done to those I love, by my weakness in shrinking from my duty in this matter. But, oh, Heaven! this burthen is hard to bear."

A weak man's vain repentance, reader, worth little or nothing in itself, but none the less bitter at the moment to the man himself!

"You will tell Lady Lumley, as soon as she is strong enough to bear the shock, George, of course; and you will lose no more time in marrying her again?"

The pale face of the other grew paler as he heard these words; and the weak mouth quivered, but all that he said was—

"Yes, I suppose I must do that now."

"Of course you must; and—there is another thing, very painful to you no doubt, but something that you must not shrink from. The baby upstairs is not your heir Lumley, and at this moment that other boy, your nephew, is. Perhaps you may be blessed with another son; though, as he will only seem to be born in order to rob his brother of his birthright, his advent can hardly be wished for. But under any circumstances, Lumley, do what you can for the other lad—Arthur—for the day may come when your son may owe everything to him."

"Owe everything to that brat! Surely not, Charles? Is it necessary, after all, that all this miserable story should be made known? Remember that where I have sinned I have sinned inno-

cently ; and that this poor babe is my only child, and therefore the rightful heir to all that I have. You would not disinherit him in favour of the representative of a younger branch of the family ?” And the baronet’s face flushed, and his voice trembled, as though he were contending with some unseen enemy who was buffeting him sorely, poor soul !

Very grave and emphatic was the reply of the other—

“ You must do that which is right, Lumley, regardless of the consequences. If you die without other issue than the child who was born yesterday, the title and the estates must go, as a matter of course, to your nephew. The Lumley entail is still in force, I presume.”

“ Yes, curse it ; there’s no doubt about that. But—*must* I expose all this history, Charles ? Why should I do so ? Don’t you see that—that—” and even in his agitation and excitement the man paused and stammered as he thought of the meanness of which he was being guilty—“ I mean, that you must acknowledge that no moral wrong will be done to my nephew if he is left in the dark respecting this miserable history, and my son succeeds—as, by heaven, he ought to succeed—to my title and estates.”

“ I can’t discuss any question of moral right or wrong with you, my dear fellow. Those things go beyond my reach. All I can do is to point out that which it is undoubtedly your duty to do, and which, moreover, you must do whether you like it or not. This story, you know, is not in our hands alone.”

“ No ; more’s the pity ; but Dawson is the only man who knows all about it.”

“ Ah ! I should like to see this Dawson, if you don’t object to my doing so.”

“ By all means, Harcourt,” was the response ; and in a short time the two men found themselves in the presence of Peter Dawson, who was busy amongst sundry greasy ledgers, rent-books, and drainage accounts, in the steward’s room.

Dawson was a lean man of fifty, with a hard-featured ruddy countenance, crowned by thin reddish hair. The casual observer who met the Lumley agent saw no reason to regard him as anything but a common type of the countryman, somewhat dull of intellect, perhaps, but whose industry and integrity more than atoned for his cloddish and uncultured mind. But those who looked a little deeper saw that something more than, or rather other than a mere dog-like fidelity to the interests of an employer was written upon that weather-beaten face. There was something about the man’s mouth—which never opened without showing at each corner a projecting tooth that looked more like the fang of a wild animal than anything else—which did not tend to reassure

the cottier or small farmer "back in his rent," who found himself in the awful presence of the agent on term day, with nothing but excuses to offer him. There was something too in the red eyes which told you that if the man's intellect were not remarkable for its strength, it had at least the last resource of the weak—cunning. In a word, Peter Dawson was not a man to be liked or trusted; but rather a man to be feared or despised, as the case might be. And yet the agent had enjoyed not only the confidence, but even the warm regard, of two heads of the house of Lumley, and had retained his connection with the estate for nearly thirty years. Sir George regarded him as one of the institutions of the place, and would as soon have thought of suspecting the loyalty of his friend as of this humble dependent, upon whose fidelity to him now he counted with unwavering confidence.

The man of the world took in Mr. Dawson's character at a glance, and the expression that passed across his own face as he did so was the reverse of pleasant. He instinctively recognized in him an enemy who was not the less dangerous that his battery was masked, and that at the best it was armed with nothing better than the animal cunning which belongs to low natures. "I must see something of this man's mind," he thought as he stood opposite to him. There was no difficulty in seeing as much of it as Mr. Dawson felt inclined to show, for when the agent saw the baronet he came forward, and with an expression of the deepest concern upon his face, respectfully pressed the hand which was offered to him, and then turned away and rubbed his red eyes with the back of his horny hand.

"You may speak freely, Dawson," said the baronet, who seemed not a little moved at this evidence of his servant's sympathy; "this gentleman is my intimate friend, and he knows everything."

"Oh, Sir George! to think that it should hev' come to this! Only to think that that poor dear lady upstairs, and the little baby, should be brought to this! Why, Sir George, it's downright wicked; but the Lord be praised, it's a dead secret between you and—and this gentleman, you say," and Peter gave a long, cunning, searching glance at Harcourt, who bore his scrutiny with a quiet smile—"and me, sir, that's been about the place for the last thirty year."

"Yes, Dawson, it's a secret now, and I know you are to be trusted; but then goodness knows how long it can be kept a secret, even if we attempt to do so."

"Nay, Sir George," and the agent's face assumed an expression of genuine dismay, "you wouldn't think of letting it out, would you?"



"Ah, Mr. Dawson," interposed Harcourt, in the blandest and most conciliatory of tones, "the world soon finds out a secret now-a-days, however carefully we may try to hide it; and in this case the secret is one which cannot be hidden. Other interests than those of Sir George Lumley are involved in the matter. You will agree with me on that point I am sure."

"Why, sir, you'll excuse me, for I'm only a dull sort o' man—but I make bold to say, that whatever may be thought of this business by a gentleman like yourself, sir, I can't see any interests in it but the interests of Sir George there."

"I see, then, that you are devoted to your employer, Mr. Dawson. I am sure that he has perfect treasure in you."

"Oh, dear no, sir; oh, dear no—very far from that," was the response, accompanied by a modestly deprecatory movement of the head, "but I won't deny as that I do my duty by Sir George."

"You were right, Harcourt, when you called that good fellow a perfect treasure," said Lumley when they were once more alone, "I don't know what I should do without him."

"Ah, I never told *you* he was a perfect treasure, George, and I shan't do so now."

"And pray why should you not say so, if you think that he is, as I know he is, what you called him just now?"

"Lumley, he may be a perfect treasure; but if you take my advice, you will let him know as little of your private affairs as you can help."

Slowly the day dragged along its weary length at Lumley Hall. Like all weak men, Sir George Lumley did not feel the full weight of the terrible blow which had fallen upon him and his for any length of time; and before evening he had almost worked himself into the belief that Dawson was right, and that the best policy to be followed was not to let the world know the truth. He was sanguine of success in this; and, endeavouring to reconcile his mind to the dishonour which he contemplated, he vowed that he would do far more for his nephew than he had ever intended to do, that he would open out for him when he was older a splendid career in any profession which he chose to follow, and that at his death he would leave him an ample independence. He would do anything for the boy, in short, but recognize him as his heir. But when, after dinner, he ventured to reveal his secret wishes to his friend, all his illusions were rudely dispelled, and the naked truth was set before his eyes—the bitter truth, that under the English law his child was illegitimate, and incapable of inheriting the entailed estates of the family.

"There is only one thing to be done, Lumley, for the poor

child. You must cut down your establishment, and save for him. Out of your fifteen thousand a-year you may put by five easily ; and you ought to do that at least."

These were Harcourt's last words as they parted for the night, and the baronet, who, deprived of the illusory hope which had momentarily buoyed him up, was once more in the depth of despair, solemnly promised his friend that he would do this much in reparation of the great wrong which his child had suffered at his hands.

Sir George Lumley was never re-married to his wife, for that unhappy woman became acquainted with the truth within a few days of her confinement. The miserable man, possessed by the one idea of getting over a painful task, actually thought that he could tell his story more easily whilst his wife was too weak to question him as to its details. He did so ; and he inflicted upon Lady Lumley a shock which she was unable to sustain. Within a week she had passed away to a rest which was a merciful deliverance from the miseries that would have awaited her earthly future. As Lady Lumley she was laid in the family vault, in which the plebeian wife had not found a resting place ; as Lady Lumley, her parentage, her virtues, and her premature death were duly recorded in marble on the walls of the church of the parish ; and as Lady Lumley she was mourned by rich and poor, for all who knew her loved her.

But the child lived, and was regarded by all but Peter Dawson and Charles Harcourt as the heir to the title and estates. And Sir George Lumley lived too, though a strangely altered man. Not a few marvelled, indeed, at the circumstance that the death of Lady Lumley was followed by the reduction of the establishment at the Hall, and by such a change in the personal habits of its owner as made it apparent to everybody that he was living much within his means. Sir George remembered his vow to Harcourt, however, and he kept it.

END OF THE PROLOGUE.

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## BOOK THE FIRST.

SOWING.

### CHAPTER I.

THE GRAND ALLIANCE DISCOUNT COMPANY.

THE time is the year 1861,—the month being June now drawing to a close. The scene is Hyde Park ; and what Hyde Park is upon

a June evening is known to all who know anything of London. The season, so soon to die utterly away, is at its height, and this evening, when hardly a breath of air stirs the branches of the glorious trees that stand between Knightsbridge and the Serpentine, the neighbourhood of the drive and of the Row are crowded by all the world and his wife. There are many scenes more beautiful, and many more animated, than that which is presented in Hyde Park on such an afternoon as this: but there are not many which have more interest for the ordinary Englishman, or which afford more scope for the exercise of the faculty of moralizing which is so strong within the breasts of some of us. The fashion of London, its rank, its wealth, its beauty, are before us as we lounge against the iron railing of the drive, or take a cheap two-pennyworth in an iron-chair under the trees. Yonder dimly discernible in the straggling line of carriages is the splendid equipage of the Duchess of Heatherland — *the* Duchess, whom all men adore and all women love, and who is seated there with the wonderfully beautiful Lord Lancelot beside her, looking serenely unconscious of the fact that she is being followed by thousands of eyes, and that her bonnet, her hair, her gloves, her mantle, her very parasol are being devoured by countless feminine imitators, resolved to appear to-morrow in an attire which shall be as exact a copy of that she now wears as time and circumstances will permit. There is Sir Charles Grandison on the box-seat of his drag, surrounded by a laughing bevy of aristocratic beauties. The Yorkshire baronet, as he “tools” his splendid horses with marvellous ease and dexterity, looks so amiable and good-natured that you can hardly conceive he has been in at the death of any creature more formidable than the sly Reynard; still less can you associate his cheery, beaming face, and merry laugh, with those stories of “dering do,” which, when they reached us from the Crimea six years ago, thrilled even the coldest hearts with a glorious flush of enthusiasm, and made Yorkshiremen proud that Sir Charles came from their “own country side.” And there, with his mouth twisted into that queer grin which *Punch* never fails to reproduce, at least twice a month, is our great statesman Lord Pleasington: for this is Wednesday afternoon, and in these halcyon days, when Reform Bills are not thought of out of Birmingham and Manchester, and Irish troubles are limited to the loquacity of Irish members, great Ministers of State can find time to take their part in society, and to appear amongst their social equals, whenever they like to do so. A grave judge goes past us in an open landau, accompanied by his blooming wife, and three or four curly-haired children. A solemn bishop, who looks slightly hen-pecked by the Mrs. Proudie, who edges him into a corner of the barouche, is



next in the string ; and he in turn is followed by Mr. Reginald Somerset, who enjoys the double reputation of being the richest Commoner and the most unfortunate husband in England. Beautiful girls decked out to the best advantage—for are we not in the very heart of the “woman-market of the West?”—fill the next carriage, and you know that Mrs. Mountchessington is determined that one of her daughters at least, shall secure the prize for which she is angling, ere the season ends, and Belgravia sees its last ball, and Mayfair its last kettle-drum for the year. And the prize himself? There he is seated in that matchless cab which passes along in the opposite direction. He is no less a personage than the most noble the Marquis of Surlybrow, a weedy, lanky youth, whose only merit is the cool cynicism which shews itself as he languidly salutes the fair Mountchessingtons. He salutes the occupants of the next carriage also—a modest one-horse brougham—and they, too, are girls young and fair and well-dressed ; but you would search the *Court Guide* in vain for any record of their names. Would you, I wonder, find in that respectable voucher-book the name of the gentleman who comes next in the long line—a gentleman of decidedly Hebraic countenance, and by no means prepossessing in his general appearance, but who atones in some degree for his own ugliness by the beauty of the young lady seated beside him?

“Who has ‘Satan’ got in his trap to-day? Oh, the Pepita. I thought as much. Wonder when the old fellow will go back to his own again. ’Pon my word, they must have missed him all these years.”

The speaker is the tall, good-looking man who has been leaning for the last half-hour against the rails between two younger companions at the point where “the drive” and “the Row” converge.

“Well but, Carny, when he goes,” says one of the youngsters—a youth with “Household Brigade” writ large upon his placid and ingenuous countenance—“What will become of the fatherless bairns he leaves behind him, such as Softley here, for instance?”

“Are you talking about old Shent-per-Shent, you two? Confound him. Find something better to talk about, and oblige me,” are the remarkable words which fall from Mr. Softley, whose name is not altogether an inappropriate one.

“Come, Softley, my boy ; honour that parent of yours in remembrance of the invaluable pecuniary assistance he has so often afforded to yourself and your industrious colleagues of the War Office. It will pay you some day to do so, I have no doubt.”

“It will be more to the point, Dawkes, if Softley can induce ‘Satan’ to honour his bills ; but, hang it, we needn’t continue to

torture the innocent. It's bad enough that he should have seen Bogey, without having to listen, whilst we discuss his merits."

Softley, to whom it was evident that this conversation with respect to a notorious money-lender of the period had not been altogether palatable, showed signs of manifest relief at this suggestion on the part of the man who had been addressed as "Carny," but whose full title, as it was seen at the head of his little bill from Mr. Poole's, was "Carnaby Hickson, Esq., Guelph Club." Mr. Hickson, of whom in the course of this veracious history we shall see a good deal, was one of those men about town who "belong" to their clubs in a stricter sense of the word than that in which it is usually applied; men who seem to be as much part and parcel of the club belongings, as the billiard-tables or the dining-room clock, and who are always identified amongst their familiars as "Brown of Boodles," "Jones of the Army and Navy," or "little Thompson of the Windham."

Looking around him for some means of diverting the attentions of his companions from the somewhat painful topic they had been discussing, Softley's eyes sought in the familiar procession of horsemen and horsewomen who were still to be seen in the Row a pair of riders who were unknown to him. One of these riders was a man of six-and-twenty, the other a youth of eighteen.

"Do you know that couple on the bay and the Arab, Carny, old fellow? Saw them here yesterday, but never saw them before."

"My dear boy, I'm not surprised at your ignorance with respect to the identity of those two mysterious young men. You see, Softley, you don't belong to 'us'; you have not yet passed through the ordeal of the ballot-box at the Guelph. If you had, you would know that the man on the bay—and a very nice nag, too—is Lumley, the hero of that business at Chunderabagh, in the mutiny year. Gad, sir, he's just come back from India. Not been home a month, I believe. But then he had the good sense to get himself elected a member of the Guelph whilst he was out in the East; and he did a great deal better, Dawkes, than if he had gone in for your 'Rag and Famish,' or any of your stupid service clubs. As for the gawky boy on the Arab—and it's a crying shame that such a cub should be mounted in that style—he's the only son of Sir George Lumley. You know the man, Softley, don't you? member of Brooks's. Heavy county swell in Midlandshire; house in Park Lane there. Worth a pot of money."

"Yes: of course I know him. Isn't he the Liberal member for Midlandshire, and didn't I meet him at my aunt Jerningham's ball last season? And the cub is his son, you say? Well, Carny, though I admire good looks, and the other Lumley—his cousin or something of that sort I suppose?—is an uncommon nice-looking,

fellow, I'd a great deal rather stand in the ugly boy's shoes than in those of the military Adonis on the bay. Why the Lumley estates must be worth twenty thousand if they're worth a penny."

"All that, and more too, Softley. I know for a fact that the Lumley entail is good for sixteen thousand a-year, and this man has been saving nearly ten thousand of that ever since the lad was born. Wants to make a second Rothschild of him, they say. Luck like *that* don't fall in the way of either of you, my children," and the benevolent Carny Hickson looked down upon his two youthful friends and admirers with a melancholy smile.

"At any rate," said Dawkes—cornet Dawkes of the — Life Guards—"the lad's worth knowing, though the more these sort of men have the less they'll part with."

"How do, Lumley? how do? Warm this afternoon, ain't it? Nice nag that of yours?" It was Carny Hickson who spoke, for the "pair of horsemen"—excuse the plagiarism dear G. P. R. James—had by this time reached the end of the Row, and turning were now close to the trio.

"What, is it you, Carny, my boy?" was the response. Everybody learned to call Mr. Carnaby Hickson "Carny" within three weeks of the time when they became acquainted with him, and Arthur Lumley was no exception to the rule. "I couldn't get to the club last night to take my part in that rubber as I promised; but you shan't be without your revenge. By the way, allow me to introduce my cousin, Mr. Lumley, to you. Dare say you know his father, Sir George?"

"Delighted to make Mr. Lumley's acquaintance, I'm sure. I used often to meet Sir George when he was a member of the Guelph. But he doesn't come much now: in fact, I haven't seen him for an age."

"You'll see him to-night, if you are going to Mrs. Harcourt's assembly. Not going, eh! That's a pity. I and my cousin will be there, and I dare say I shall look in at the club when I get away."

"Yes do, Lumley. I expect some men there to-night. I should like you to know, and besides we can have that rubber."

The cousins were soon on their way towards the western end of the Row, and a brisk canter carried them ere long clear of the other groups of riders. Then it was, that Gerald Lumley, a dark-browed lad of eighteen, whose harsh, strongly-marked features were sufficiently irregular to justify the epithet of ugly, which had just been applied to him, broke the silence that had prevailed between them for some minutes.

"Who's that dandy, Arthur? Where have you managed to pick up a cad like that?"



"My dear Gerald, you use uncommonly strong language. I suppose you do not care to take advice from a poor devil like myself, or else I should certainly recommend you to express your opinions with respect to the people you meet, in language a little less unconventional than that which you usually adopt. Take my word for it; this is a very bad habit of yours."

No one could doubt Captain Arthur Lumley's claims to be considered a wonderfully handsome man; nor would most people who heard him speak, have questioned the fact that there was something singularly pleasing—were this a less prosaic age, we might even say, fascinating—in his manner. The beautiful boy of seven, whom we saw eighteen years ago at Lumley Hall, had developed into the polished man of the world, blessed with all the personal gifts which the vainest of men could desire, having about his bearing and manner that indescribable charm with which no amount of training or experience can invest any one, and happy in the conscious possession of a perfect temper, and an easy air of good-breeding, which was of itself the hall-mark which stamped his right to the conventional rank of gentleman. There was a smile of imperturbable good humour upon his bright, handsome face, as he responded to his cousin's outburst of boyish petulance. Few persons would have been able to resist the charm of his manner, or to avoid an immediate reconciliation with one who could at least command the soft answer which turneth away wrath.

Gerald Lumley, however, seemed by no means disposed to succumb to the fascinations of his cousin's manner. A dark frown gathered upon his square forehead, and he gnawed his short upper lip nervously whilst the other was speaking. Then he burst out with a fierce flash of anger that would have astonished any one who had witnessed it and knew its trivial cause.

"Confound your advice, Arthur Lumley! Keep it till it's asked for, I take advice from nobody, and what's more I don't intend to do so. Fellows like that snob you were talking to just now, may like to have your views upon everything in general, but they don't interest me."

There was a faint, a very faint flush upon Captain Lumley's cheek at this attack; but the voice with which he spoke, was as calm and as liquid-sweet as ever, when he said,

"For goodness' sake, Gerald, don't take offence where none was meant. You and I have no need to quarrel I'm sure; and we never shall do so, if I can help it. See—" and the speaker pointed towards a carriage just entering the Park in which were seated two ladies—"here are the Harcourts. What a pity we are riding and cannot join them."

The face of his cousin was suddenly flooded with a crimson

flush. The dark eyes under the shaggy eyebrows flashed with new light, and a smile, that for a moment seemed to bring his discordant features into harmony, passed over his countenance. And Captain Arthur Lumley also showed signs of emotion, as his eye followed the well-appointed carriage that was rapidly rolling eastwards along the drive; but the Captain did not display his feelings in so unmistakable a manner as that in which his cousin had done. He smiled brightly, showing, as he did so, the prettiest, the whitest, smallest, and most regular set of teeth in the world, and lifting his hat bowed profoundly to the occupants of the carriage. There was an answering bow which his cousin observed with eager, jealous eyes, and with a certain proud curl of his upper lip possibly meant to simulate an indifference which his blushes had shown could not be real.

"What a charming girl Miss Harcourt is, Gerald! Upon my word, I never was half so much in love with any girl before, as I am with her."

There was a moment's pause, and then Gerald Lumley replied in the harsh grating voice which was one of his characteristics:

"It's not a question of your being in love with Laura, Arthur. Almost everybody is in love with her. The important point is whether she is likely to fall in love with you."

The smile which flitted across the other's face, revealed the fact that Captain Lumley was not altogether unconscious of his personal advantages; but it was with no air of coxcombry that he answered,

"That is of course a very important point, Gerald. There is another, however, which comes before it; and that is the melancholy fact that even if I had reason to believe that she was not disinclined to listen favourably to me, I could not put the question to the test. A Captain of Lancers with nothing better than his uncle's bounty to depend upon, is hardly a match for Miss Harcourt, the daughter of a Secretary of State, and the heiress of those fabulous estates in Lancashire. I hope you appreciate the advantages, Gerald, of our law of primogeniture."

"I didn't make the law, Arthur; and I've no doubt it's a very good one; but you needn't suppose that Laura Harcourt will ever marry anybody either for his fortune or — or for his good looks."

Captain Lumley laughed melodiously, and indeed, there was something in Gerald's manner as he spoke, which showed that the latter part of his sentence was by no means intended to apply to good looks in the abstract, but had a direct and personal bearing upon the gallant Captain himself.

"Then, supposing that we should both compete for this great

prize, Gerald ; you and I will, after all, be upon a level," was all the reply that the boy received to his impertinent remark.

"Who said that I intended to compete with you, or with anybody else, Arthur?" was flashed forth directly in fiery tones. "I've never spoken of Laura Harcourt as a 'charming young lady.' I leave you to pay her compliments, and make love to her after the latest Belgravian fashion."

Decidedly Gerald Lumley was what a good many of his father's friends called him, a disagreeable cub. Passionate, outspoken, haughty, intractable as the wild colt, he was guilty of all those social sins which are forgiven in nobody but an eldest son. As it was, however, with the Lumley title and the Lumley estates awaiting him, as the world believed, young as he was, and forward and disagreeable as he was also, he was still smiled upon with seraphic sweetness by fashionable mothers, was still courted and flattered, and made much of by those who felt that the reversion to a baronetcy and twenty thousand a-year does not come into the matrimonial market every day. He would have demanded your pity, good reader, had all that the world thought of him been true, and had he really been the heir to his father's titles and estates. For hardly in the world can there be a lot, which to the hungry crowd appears more enviable, and yet is more to be deplored, than that which sets a man from his very youth upwards upon a pedestal where no correcting hand, save the hand of God alone, can reach him, which lays before him the world and all its good things, and leaves him to wander at his own free will amongst its flowers and fruits, to pluck, to taste, to cast away, as he listeth, 'no man' daring to check his fancy, few presuming even to suggest that he should take a particular path, or should avoid a special form of pleasure. Hard is his lot, with all its luxuries ; and more to be pitied than the toilers of our fields and seas, is the "poor-rich man." But if Gerald Lumley would have demanded your pity had he been all that the world took him for, how much more must he require it, when we know that after a training such as this, he is about to be cast down from the place in which in his pride and ignorance he imagines himself securely fixed? Yet, does he really need our pity and our sympathy more in such a case than if all was to go well with him, and the promise of his youth were to be more than fulfilled in the cloudless future? Time, which has much in store for him of which he knows nothing now, and experience, wisest and hardest of teachers, must be left to answer the question. Not always is it however, that the swiftest and smoothest voyage brings in the largest profit. The bark which has been tossed and battered in a hundred gales, and yet reaches port at last, even though it be with leaking sides



and shattered masts and tangled rigging, may carry in its hold a freight a thousand times more precious than that borne by yonder dainty pleasure-yacht which was never yet caught in any tempest that ever blew; aye, and the tossings, and delays, and dangers which it has encountered, may have made that freight infinitely more valuable than it was when the ship set sail upon her stormy voyage.

But we must leave the two cousins to finish their evening canter, and precede them to the house in Park Lane, where Sir George Lumley is at this moment engaged in his study. You would hardly recognize the baronet again, as you see him seated at a writing-table covered with a litter of papers. There is not, it is true, much change in the personal appearance of the man. Save that the light hair is now as white as snow, and is very thin, there is hardly an alteration to notice in his physical characteristics. He has not grown stout with years, nor has his face lost the sickly pallor which has belonged to it for many a past year. Yet, there is in the face a change which alters its whole expression, and makes you ask yourself in doubt, whether this can be the listless, purposeless idler of eighteen years ago. Where before there was in the eye an indolent vacuity which told of an aimless life, you see now the signs of a restless activity, which shows that there are, after all, some things in the world in which the man feels an absorbing interest. And these signs are not to be disregarded as false and misleading. For Sir George Lumley, in common phrase, has turned over a new leaf since we saw him last, has found a work to do, and has done it with a passionate energy of which none of his friends had once thought him capable. His great purpose in life, the object for which for the last eighteen years he has been living, is to secure for his son a fortune which shall in some degree compensate him for the loss of the title and estates of the family. With this end in view Sir George Lumley for eighteen years past has been doing what no Lumley ever did before. He has not only saved money—of itself a remarkable circumstance in the history of the Lumleys—but he has made money in trade! He has speculated in ships and shares, in mines and railways, in cargoes of goods of all descriptions for all quarters of the globe. He has bought and sold; he has spent hours in dingy merchants' offices in districts of the city, of the very existence of which he was ignorant, until he had passed his fortieth year; he has been familiar with all manner of men, not a few of whom could not speak as correctly as his butler, and did not dress as well as his head game-keeper, but whose assistance was necessary to him in the work he had in hand; he has taken long journeys by land and sea, to inspect lead mines in Spain, and timber claims in Transylvania, and

derelict vessels in the Baltic. For eighteen years, in fact, he has been engaged in making money, not by one means only, but by every means that fate or fortune put within his reach. He has, of course, had many losses, some of them serious ones, during that time. It is only in romances that men engage in hazardous speculations for a long course of years without suffering any losses whatever. Nevertheless upon the whole, Sir George Lumley has prospered in the work in which he has been engaged. As a rule, the mines in which he bought shares were not "drowned out" the week afterwards; the railways which he "promoted," were for the most part duly made; his vessels were not often lost, or, if they were lost, they were well insured. So, as we see him to-day, Sir George is a successful man in the world's sense of the term: that is to say, he has made money, and has kept it. This afternoon, whilst the Park which spreads before his windows is bright with the summer sunshine and gay with the fashion and life of London society, he is buried in long accounts of ships, and mines sold, and of shares bought with the money thus realized. For Sir George Lumley is retiring from business. Counting his life by the number of years he has seen, he is not yet an old man; but already he feels age creeping upon him, and he knows that he cannot depend much longer upon his own strength in the hard business of money-making. Moreover, he has reached the goal, which long ago he set before himself when he started upon the race. Were he to die to-night, his son, the nameless boy, who knows nothing of the sorrow amidst which he was born, of the tragedy which closed his mother's life, would inherit two hundred thousand pounds, the fruit of these eighteen years' savings and makings, and would inherit that amount, not in hard cash, but in something which the world esteems far more valuable than mere cash—shares of the Grand Alliance Discount Company.

In the year 1861, experience, the sad experience which came five years later, had not yet taught us to beware of joint-stock companies, as though they were a species of commercial rattlesnake, bent upon first fascinating and then devouring their prey. We believed in them then; we had no idea that ruin was involved in our intermeddling with them, or that the time would come when these same "companies" which offered such facilities to those who were in haste to be rich, would spread such losses and disasters throughout the country, that even the most impecunious amongst us, the curate with his eight children and eighty pounds a year in Dorsetshire, and the shipwright with half the number of children and double the income at Deptford, would feel the fatal influence which they spread around them. And if, in those days of blissful ignorance, we believed in any one scheme more than another, that

scheme was the Grand Alliance Discount Company. Grave city men who didn't make ten pounds worth of bad debts in a "turn-over" of thousands every year, rushed to take shares in the Discount Company when it was first floated upon the market. Had not the "Grand Allies" been, for more than one generation, first amongst the princes of Mammondism? Had it not been theirs to build up and to cast down? to utter the word which made this man prosperous and rich, or drove that one into the Gazette or Whitecross Street? Never had autocrats ruled their states more absolutely than these men had ruled the English Money Market, and never had autocrats enjoyed a more unmurmuring loyalty than that which was offered to them by city men of every degree. When, therefore, it was announced that—apparently out of the simple goodness of those hearts which seemed to beat to the sound of rustling banknotes and clinking sovereigns—the Grand Allies were about formally to abdicate their throne, or rather to invite all the world to come up and join them upon it, the excitement of the city knew no bounds. Never before had such a golden chance been offered to those who had money, and never before had such an opportunity been lost by those who had it not. How all the world ran after shares in the company; how great was the joy of those to whom these shares were allotted, how bitter the grief of those whose requests were not complied with, need not be told here. Early in the spring of 1861, the Grand Alliance Discount Company was fairly started on its voyage, and Sir George Lumley enjoyed the honour of being the largest shareholder in the undertaking.

Men envied the baronet more than they chose to say when they heard the news. "Curse him! his usual luck," said McGrawler, the Scotch iron merchant who had been obliged to content himself with a paltry ten thousand pounds' worth of shares. "These men with 'andles to their names gets the pick of heverything," was the comment of Alderman Heavisides, the eminent city tallow manufacturer; and no doubt other commercial magnates expressed their feelings with regard to the transaction in not dissimilar terms. Sir George Lumley himself simply thought that he had been very fortunate, and that he could now enjoy the evening of his life in a manner which he had once never ventured to anticipate. The shares were already rising rapidly in the market. Great things were prophesied of the coming dividend, and it seemed by no means improbable that, at his death, his son would succeed to an income as large as the rental of the Lumley estates.

The shadow of his past sorrows, his weakness, his sins, his follies, and the sufferings which others had endured for him and with him, had not passed entirely away; but time had softened



the woe which once filled his heart, and though, through all his life there ran a vein of subdued melancholy, no man dreamed that the prosperous Midlandshire baronet had known any griefs worse than those which usually belong even to the well-ordered lives of the richest; still less did society contemplate the existence of such a domestic skeleton as that the reader wots of.

For, except Charles Harcourt, Peter Dawson, and the family solicitor, no one knew anything of the circumstances attending Gerald Lumley's birth. By the persistence of which even weak men are at times capable, Sir George had succeeded in gaining the consent of his friend to the preservation of the secret as a secret. He had presented so many reasons why it would be better that nothing should be made known at present, and had shrunk with such evident terror from any further revelation of a truth the knowledge of which had killed the woman he loved, that even Harcourt ceased to recommend a course opposed to his wishes: and thus, after those fatal days at Lumley Hall, upon which the baronet himself never looked back without a shudder, the secret of the marriage which was no marriage, and of the son who, in the eyes of the law, was nobody's child, was hushed up in the breasts of the few men acquainted with it. None of them forgot it: each had his own views as to the time when that secret must be made known, and as to the results which were likely to follow from its revelation; but all felt that, when the story was told, such a blow would fall upon the pride of Gerald Lumley as he would be ill able to bear.

The boy himself had been brought up by his father in a manner which had often called forth the remonstrances of Harcourt. Pampered in every possible manner; petted and spoiled by his only parent, and allowed an amount of independence and freedom from control which would have been the reverse of beneficial to a grown man; his character had been marred whilst he was still a child, and he had become, as we have seen, proud, imperious, and self-willed to a degree which made his father's friend tremble for his future. The splendid fortune which Sir George had accumulated for him would place him, it was true, in a position in society little inferior to that which he would have occupied had he been legitimate. The material loss apparently would be slight, and so far it was well; but, on the other hand, the blow to his pride, which was ever impending over him, was one which even Harcourt's unflinching mind hardly dared to contemplate. It was his constant knowledge that sooner or later this blow must fall upon the son of his friend, which led him to treat the lad with the tenderness which he showed towards his own children. Nay, had Gerald Lumley been Harcourt's own son, he could hardly have received

greater kindness from him than that he had experienced at the statesman's hands throughout his life. He was "like one of the family," Mrs. Harcourt would often say, and many a time her motherly soul was grieved by outbursts of passion on the part of the boy whom she had learned to love, and who in turn loved her in the place of the mother he had never known.

But we have wandered far away from Sir George Lumley as he sits in his study this afternoon, busy amongst papers relating to old transactions in shares and goods; burning some, preserving others, and going through his work with a methodical regularity, and an air of placid content which speak of a mind at ease with itself and all the world. There is no longer any need to preserve these old memoranda of cargoes long ago bought and sold and consumed, and scrip long ago transferred. The fruit of all these speculations, the harvest reaped from all this labour, has been garnered in one store-house; and here at his elbow are the letters of his agent telling of the purchases of shares in the Grand Alliance Discount Company, and congratulating him upon the rare good fortune by which he has been enabled to invest the fruit of eighteen years of unremitting toil in "the most glorious certainty ever presented to the city."

A complacent smile spreads over Sir George Lumley's face as he reads these words in one of the letters of his agent in Capel Court, and he pats the paper tenderly, as though it were a messenger which brought good news. As I think of him sitting there in his complacency and serenity, building up endless dreams of the happiness and peace which the future has in store for him, I am reminded irresistibly of that other rich man of whom we are told that he built barns and stored fruits and said—"Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease.' But God said unto him, 'Thou fool!'"

## DEAD AND ALIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS.

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IN this brick province of ours, where demolition and creation are proceeding simultaneously, there are greater varieties of neighbourhoods than in any other city in the world. Thus we have new neighbourhoods and old neighbourhoods, and neighbourhoods which are neither old nor new; fashionable neighbourhoods, genteel neighbourhoods and neighbourhoods the reverse of genteel—not to speak of the neighbourhoods devoted to particular nationalities. I once heard a lady describe a neighbourhood as “dressy;” but that, I presume, referred more to the inhabitants than their dwellings. Lastly, surrounding all, apart from all, and occupying an immense area of the metropolis, there are the *poor* neighbourhoods. Most of these localities have been described by the facile pens of our greatest novelists; but I venture to draw attention to a class of neighbourhood which has to a certain extent escaped notice—the dead and alive neighbourhood.

From the foregoing list are purposely excluded the utterly dead (but not gone) neighbourhoods, whose ramshackle tenements are chalked in “lots,” waiting only the solution of some legal quibble, to be carted away to oblivion. Still less must I be understood as alluding to those highly ornate edifices, conspicuous by twos and threes in some of our thoroughfares, which are so eminently calculated to impress the popular mind with becoming reverence for the High Court of Chancery. No—my business now is with those neighbourhoods, those houses, those shops, and those people described in the colloquialism which heads this paper.

Dead and alive! Wonderfully expressive are those opposite adjectives in conjunction! Their genteel brethren of the “dreary,” “depressing,” and “disheartening” school, are tame in comparison. Though purely a low-class saying, it is yet, like many others from the same source, exhaustive in the extreme. Should you listen for it in the patrician saloons of Belgravia, you will listen in vain; still more unlikely is it to greet your ears in middle-class drawing-rooms, or the scarcely less pretentious homes of trade; but the truth nevertheless



is, that with all our boasted prosperity, there are amongst us myriads of homes, hearts, and handicrafts which are neither dead nor alive.

The dead and alive neighbourhood may owe its character to several causes. Foremost among these is the diversion of its traffic into other channels. Or a railway may stride contemptuously over its thoroughfares, rendering them more dismal by contrast. Thus, the district lying south of Vauxhall Bridge was doubtless a livelier place when the Portsmouth mail-coaches woke its echoes with their horns, not to speak of its time-honoured Gardens—gardens no more. By-the-bye, what a fine specimen of the dead and alive bridge that is! The *trottoir* in particular, looking up stream, is such a deserted promenade, I fancy the pence of the people who pass on that side would, at the year's end, scarcely purchase an aluminium watch for the dead and alive toll-keeper. The chief excitement appears to be the occasional passage of the royal carriages to and from the Crystal Palace. Yet there was a time, not so very long ago, when the very name "Vauxhall" conjured up visions of delight. Not, I mean, in the days of its decadence, when the place was little more than a second-rate Cremorne, but in the old days:—"About the year ten, sir!" Then was the time to see Vauxhall. Even now there are not a few pairs of old eyes which sparkle at the word, and not a few old heads which wag in triumph at the recollection of little Mrs. Bland, with her white hat and feather, and her song "We'll have the last word! Oh! yes, we will!"

If you wish to see a dead and alive neighbourhood to perfection, it is necessary to avoid as much as possible the great arteries leading from the city to the suburbs. Of course in the city itself you must not expect to meet with such a phenomenon; although even there, if you know where to look for them, you will find plenty of dead and alive *men*. But, generally speaking, these city people carry a city atmosphere about them wherever they go. They have an uncomfortable bustle, utterly destructive to that reflection and repose indispensable for the proper appreciation of dead and alive objects. They will not reside in these neighbourhoods, however cheap, because it is too far to catch the omnibus, which vehicle they prefer passing close to their own doors, to be mounted upon with the last piece of toast in their mouths. So you, the student, had better eschew the vicinity of the main roads altogether and endeavour to lose yourself in the byeways. This is very easy to accomplish, as it is an everyday occurrence for persons even of a fifty years' residence in London, to do so. Having lost yourself, you will be in a proper frame of mind for studying the class of

neighbourhood of which you have come in search. Probably you will be surrounded by the frame houses of a former age, with their high-pitched roofs and quaint aspect. In that case you will have the additional flavour of antiquity; and if you are of an imaginative turn, the very buildings themselves will seem to your eyes to be thinking, thinking, thinking, of the days that are past and the folks that are gone. But, more likely, your neighbourhood will be of modern construction and have become what it is through the caprice of some fashion or the successful rivalry of adjacent neighbourhoods. It may either be in Peckham or Camberwell in the south, or Hoxton or Islington in the north; still, wherever situated, it will present the same salient features, the same woe-begone aspect of shabby gentility, and decay.

Let us take, say, some forlorn settlement in the backwoods of Islington, from whence the class of inhabitants which formerly peopled it, have migrated to the Towns of Somers, Kentish, or Camden. What do we see? Tenements of red brick, pierced by long narrow windows, contrived apparently to let in as little light as possible. Date—Queen Anne or the first George. These, my good sir, were the suburban residences of the mercers of Aldersgate, the grocers of Bishopsgate, the goldsmiths of Cheapside. What are they now? Ask yonder slipshod laundress who surveys you curiously from that richly-carved doorway. She will tell you a different tale. So will the struggling tailor next door. So will the bricklayer's labourer seated on the step next door to that, frowning at you from behind his blackened clay-pipe. And as for the corner-house, once the dwelling-place of a common-councilman, its ample bow-window displays nothing now but a meagre assortment of peppermint-sticks and brandy-balls. (Gog and Magog! brandy-balls!) After this, the mind is somewhat prepared for the marine-store-dealer round the corner, who exhibits a quantity of old metal in his front garden. By-the-bye, who are the insane people that buy old tools made of nothing particular but rust? And what use do they put them to when they have got them? The dealer under notice is subject to affectionate enquiries from the police, not after his health, but after his cellar; he being more than suspected of receiving stolen goods. The other residents in our neighbourhood, with the exception of a sprinkling of hard-working poor, are not much higher, I fear, in the moral scale than the marine store-dealer. Hither come outlawed bankrupts, to burrow in obscurity and exist on the earnings of their wives. And, were you to enquire of the constable on the beat concerning the occupations of the frowsy men you see at intervals, the only reply would probably be an official shake of

the head, far more eloquent than words. All the tenements are let to the occupiers at a weekly rental, which includes rates and taxes. The collectorship of these rents is the reverse of a sinecure. The collector himself is very fierce, very relentless and very domineering; indeed, in genteeler circles he would be designated a bully. But here he is the right man in the right place. You will therefore not be surprised to hear that the brokers are never out of the dead and alive neighbourhood; or that it is a very common occurrence to see hauled away on trucks, the last belongings of poverty—its dead and alive furniture.

The few trades that are carried on, partake of the dismal nature of the locality. There is a dead and alive baker's shop with a few unpleasant-looking loaves in the window, and there is an equally dispiriting general shop, where the proprietor is always "out of" everything you want. But perhaps the greatest curiosity of all is the dead and alive public-house.

A little way back from the footpath, its rusty sign swinging moaningly to the wind, stands this grimy temple of Bacchus. Temple! It is more like a mortuary for departed tipplers. Through its dirt-stained windows all that is discernible is a faded, buff-coloured curtain, once red. No announcements of Anybody's Old Tom, or anybody else's Cognac, or anybody else's Pine-Apple Rum. Neither is the "London Directory taken in" there. Certainly a board at the entrance informs you in blurred letters, whose beer is consumed on those ghostly premises; but if that beer be no more exhilarating than that board, you feel that you would rather be without it altogether. The greasy doors need a strong push, so different from the swinging, half-open portals of more modern establishments, and when you have pushed your way through, you find the interior quite in keeping with the exterior. All the fittings of this ancient "public," you will observe, are of the most primitive description. This is not to be wondered at, when you consider that its existence began long before the great gin-palace eruption broke out all over London. In those days, this was a genuine specimen of the British tavern, a venerated institution, instead of a mere drinking-bar, and the old house clings to the old ways still. But its brasses are never polished, its zinc counter is never cleaned, its day is gone. No wonder it is never "used" by the neighbours.

They prefer the brilliant gin-shop a quarter of a mile away, where for their money they can have plenty of light, glitter and cheerfulness, in addition to being waited upon by fascinating nymphs with fair hands and silvery voices, said nymphs attired in the latest fashions. You will not be surprised at the preference when



you enter the dead and alive coffee-room, with its solitary, flickering gas jet; where the one-eyed waiter—who is always so ready on the smallest provocation with interminable stories of the late Marquis of Waterford—brings your spirits and water; or when you re-pass the dead and alive old landlord standing behind his dead and alive bar, with the bunch of brimstone matches dangling above his head, and labelled “the light of other days.”

I think it was the late Mr. Albert Smith, who in defining something more than ordinarily depressing, gave the illustration of “A back street on a wet Sunday.” I need not say that this refers exclusively to poor neighbourhoods. But a poor neighbourhood, except when the rain descends in torrents, is anything but dead and alive. The swarms of children, in fine weather, prevent it from suffering under any such imputation; for wherever children are, there also are joy, and noise, and laughter. Yet, when the children are away, gone perhaps under the pilotage of some kind souls to rollick among the buttercups, the place will assume a very different aspect. It will have become a dead and alive neighbourhood. Wan, patient-looking women, nursing sickly infants, are the only people you see about, with the exception perhaps of some scowling artizan out of work, who looks at you as if he thought you contemplated breaking all the commandments at once, to his personal injury. Return in the evening, when the youngsters have come back from their outing, and how changed is the scene. The footpaths, the roads, the pavements overflow with the refreshed little men and women, noisily reminiscent of the simple pleasures of the day. But we have no business here, my friend; it has ceased to be a dead and alive neighbourhood. And as we take our departure, let us be thankful that such things as youth and hope can never be dead and alive.

If there be one thing more miserable looking than the old dead and alive neighbourhood, it is the new dead and alive neighbourhood. In the case of the former, its dinginess is in keeping with its fortunes; besides which, there is a dignity in age under whatever aspect. But the new dead and alive neighbourhood has no claims of this nature. It is a thing of yesterday. Its road is merely a remnant of the ploughed field on which it stands, but the seeds in the furrows are ancient oyster-shells and fractured ginger-beer bottles,—those being the materials in the building-imagination best adapted to form a roadway. The last hedge-row has scarcely disappeared, the last gipsy-encampment has departed to give place to — what? half-occupied, bran-new houses, rearing to a great height their miserably thin walls, the stucco already peeling from their pretentious porticoes, and their grand plate-glass windows displaying nothing

more imposing than the dirty blinds placed there by the char-woman or policeman's wife in charge. Whatever may be the reason, whether drainage, or whether the air, whether it is too far, or whether it is not far enough, nobody will live there. Thus the new dead and alive neighbourhood sinks into premature decay.

There are hundreds of other dead and alive things in London besides neighbourhoods; but of these, space at the present moment will not allow me to speak.

## NO APPEAL.

## CHAPTER XLI.

## THE DREAMING POLLOCK AGAIN.

“Torn with vain hopes, distracted by delay,  
The old man’s love wears on from day to day,—  
Ready to kindle at the faintest touch.”

BYGRAVE.

JUST after the sunset-gun had fired that evening, Harry Penfold had strolled along the cliff in the quiet twilight, half hoping that he might chance to fall in with old Miller somewhere near his home—as he had done on many a previous evening. But the hope was a vain one, and after wandering to and fro on the cliff until it began to grow dark, he made his way up the winding path to the fisherman’s cottage.

Miller was sitting, as usual at this time of the evening, in his old seat by the fire, smoking a final pipe before his sons came back from their day’s fishing—and, as usual now, greeted the parson heartily.

“Well, minister,” he said, “you always seems to drop in when I’m lonely like, and wants a bit of comfort. Here heve I bin a thinkin’ of my poor gell, again, all this blessed evening, and a wondering whether my dream ’ll come true. And I can’t get no comfort out of it, at all, anyhow.”

“Comfort out of dreams, Miller? That’s rather like ropes out of sand, isn’t it? or nets out of cobwebs, eh?”

“That’s about it, minister. But yet I’ve know’d a sight of dreams come true—a powerful sight. Now, after you and me caught that blue and red pollock out to Piper’s Island—bless you, I dreamed, ah! I dreamed pretty well all night. And, of course, I dreamed about my gell. I was a walking on the cliff, and looking out to sea, when I sin her come flying right across the waves! That was something like a dream.”

“Well, Miller, that *was* a dream, indeed. But I don’t think she will come flying, or come across the sea, or—”

“Then,” exclaimed the old man, eagerly, “you *have* heard of



her, after all; I knowed you had! Now, what is it you have got to say?"

"I have not heard one scrap, Miller, since I saw you last. But now and then a dream does come true, and there is no knowing whether yours mayn't be a true one, after all. That blue pollock is a powerful fish!"

"Ah! minister, now you're poking fun at me, I can see. But, mind 'e, 'twas you that catched the fish, you know, and you saw what he was like. There's not a one that swims the sea like that there blue fish: and old Betty Morgan, the wise woman, out to Coxside, she do say that the next dream, after one of they fish is took, is allays a good dream, and sure to come to—"

But at this moment there was a sudden hubbub, and a sound of low voices in the little garden outside the cottage door, of which the old man could make nothing.

"What on aith,"\* he exclaimed, "is up and about now, then, minister, at this time o' night! My boys, surely, haven't a bin drinking, and got into a row—tisn't like they."

"There is not the least chance of its being your boys in a row. Miller. I suppose that they've had a grand haul of fish with the nets, this evening, and are coming home rather jolly after their day's work. Sam's voice I can hear plain enough."

As he said this, there was a still louder trampling of feet down the garden-path, the door was flung hastily open, and in rushed Sam himself, crying out—

"Where is father—where is he?"

"Why, what's the boy dreaming about?" replied the old man, rising up hastily, "*where am I?* Here, right before you. Are the lot of you gone crazy, to-night, with all this row in the garden?"

"No, father, not crazy—but mad for joy, mad for joy; that's what it is with the whole lot, Bill Saunders and the crew of the *Skylark*, and the Harrises—and Jem, too—mad for joy, mad for joy! mad for joy!"

"You'll drive me mad, Sam, if you goes on in this outlandish way, before long, you will; what on aith, I say, is it all about?"

"Who d'ye think is outside there, in the midst of all that noise and hoorayin'? who d'e think?"

But before the old man could make any answer, or even hazard a guess, the door was swung back once more, a woman rushed into the room, and flung her arms round his neck, as he cried out—

"O my God, parson, my dream 's come true. It's her, it's her, it's her! I know'd she was comin'."

\* Cornish for earth.

And then, in the ecstasy of his surprise and joy, he put both hands on her shoulders, and held her for a moment at arm's length, as if to be sure that it was his own very child, Fanny, herself.

"O my gell, my gell!" was all he could say; and then he sank down into the old oak settle, by the fire, covered his face with his hands, and let the tears have their way.

As for Fanny, she knelt at his feet, she kissed his hands, and then his withered cheek, his snow-white hair, and then his hands again.

"Can you forgive," she cried, "can you ever forgive me, father? Oh! I *have* sorrowed, and longed, and prayed, and feared for this day; and now it's come upon me all at once, and I've got no words to tell what my heart's full of! O father, pity me, have mercy upon me—speak, if it's only a word! But don't curse me, father; 'twould kill me now!"

But never a word answered the old man. All he did, was to hold fast her hand in his, as she knelt,—and still to cover his eyes with the other,—as if he dared not look up, for fear that the whole scene should turn out a dream, and vanish.

"It is me," she cried to him; "it is me, your own Fanny, that once ran away from home, and——"

"Forgive you, my gell? God forgive me as true as I forgive you, this night. But where's the villain that led you to ruin? where and who is he?—that's what I'd know. It's him that I'd curse, and if God's curse ever finds a man, may it ——"

"No, no, father, don't curse, don't curse even him. He's beyond cursing now,—beyond it all!"

"What, dead? child! dead?"

"Worse than dead, father! Blind, and dying by inches, with fever in his blood, and his brain all wrong; with little power to think, or speak, or feel! Dying with all the weight of his sins resting upon him, and, God help me, me not there to tend him. O! don't curse him, father, don't curse him! and don't curse me!"

At these words there was a silence among the little group, for a moment, and then the old man tenderly disengaged the girl from his knees, and walked quietly across the kitchen to a cupboard in the wall. This he opened, and drew out from the recess a small wickerwork chair, and carried it over to a corner near the fire opposite his own nook.

It had been Fanny's long, long, years ago, and she had spent many a happy evening in it, in the old, golden days.

"There," he said, "my gell, there is your old place by the fireside, and I have put you, your own self, back into my heart, to

bide there now altogether !” Then he kissed her, softly, on the forehead, and led her over to her old, accustomed place.

As for Fanny, herself, her heart was full, indeed, too full to speak ; and as yet not a tear had come into her aching eyes. But, now, they came in abundance ; the rock that seemed so flinty was smitten by a single kiss, and she burst into a flood of happy passionate tears.

All this strange and exciting scene had been silently witnessed by Penfold, who at the first entrance of Fanny had tried to creep out of the room unnoticed. But Sam had instantly detected the manœuvre, and set his back against the door, as much as to say, stay where you are. And by the side of this giant, was Jem, equally burly, and equally joyous at his sister’s sudden return ; and he, too, held up his finger at the “pahson,” to endorse the same edict. So that the minister, who was a favourite with all hands, had nothing for it but to stop and see the end of the strange drama, though he kept quietly back in the shade, where the old man did not for a few minutes detect him. But at last, the time for tears, even of joy, was spent, and then came a torrent of questions, to which Fanny found it hard to answer fast enough to please her eager questioners.

Little Charley, still in Sam’s arms, half asleep with utter weariness, and the sudden warmth of a great sea-coal fire, had watched and listened to the whole scene in utter amazement, but now made a most happy diversion, by calling out to Fanny, “Come and take me—come and take me.”

Up to this moment the boy had been almost forgotten. Now he was seized on, and half devoured with kisses.

Then the minister was dragged from *his* corner, and all were made to take places round the fire, as Fanny told all the wonderful adventures of the evening, in reply to endless questions and cross-questionings of the most puzzling kind.

That story there is no need to retell here ; nor even to describe the joyful supper that followed, nor the hearty glasses of hot grog, of which all partook. But the feast was over at last, and then Fanny found that the hardest part of her task still remained. She had to tell her father that she must again leave him, and go to Encomb that night.

“Father,” she said softly to the old man, “you have never asked me yet the name of my mistress at Encomb. Her name is Stone, this is little Charley her son, and his father is now lying on his death-bed——”

“The villain !” interrupted Sam. “The big villain, and serves him right, too.”

“—And his mother by this time will be half-dead with grief



for her boy. Father, I must take him back this night." It was of no avail to mince matters, and so she added boldly, "I must go at once."

"Go now, Fanny? What, leave me again? O my child! think of your own old father when you talk of this brave boy and his mother. You *can't* go to-night."

"Yes, I think she can, Miller," said a kindly voice from the corner. "And, what's more, I think she must. She's come home for good and all, now, and will be here to-morrow again. But, in the midst of all your joy, Miller, don't forget the poor mother who now, maybe, is breaking her heart far away, with her husband, perhaps, lying at death's door. God has given you a great gift to-night, make glad that mother's heart with a gift, too; give her back her child. The dreaming pollock will be a blessing to her then, as well as to you. Fanny will be here again to-morrow, long before this time."

"Ah! minister," said the old man, "it's all true what you say, but it's main hard, all the same. Here's my gell a come back, after all these long weary times, and, now, no sooner is she come than you're a taking of her away again."

"No, no, Miller; it's not I that take her away; it's her duty to go. It's the captain of the ship that calls; *she must* take that child away home to his mother in her sorrow, and then come back here to her own people."

"If so be it's God's will, minister; if it's He that calls, so be it, minister, so be it. But it's main hard all the same."

"Sam and I will start at once with her into Sandymouth," added Penfold. "I will carry the youngster, and Sam shall look after his sister, as far as the nearest cab-stand; and then we will pack her off safely to Encomb. She will be there now, before twelve o'clock."

"So be it," said the old man, "so be it, then. But suppose, parson, if you would, suppose you was to convoy her home all safe in the chay, and tell the lady that I've sent back her boy, and she mustn't fail to send back my gell to-morrow. O! if you'd do that there for us, 'twould take a load off me this night."

"Do it?" replied Penfold, "of course I will. Jem, just you run round to my cottage by the church; ask for Mrs. Penfold, and tell her that I am suddenly called away to see a sick man at Encomb,—for I must see him,—and that I shall be home about one o'clock or so. Nobody to sit up, and the door left on the latch."

Thus all was settled. In two minutes Jem had started; in less than five, old Miller had kissed his daughter and little Charley; and not long after eleven, the three travellers in a chaise were driving steadily along the winding lane to the Manor Farm.

## CHAPTER XLII.

## WATCHING AND WAITING.

“And Expectation loads the wings of Time.”

THE HOUR-GLASS.

MANY a weary night had Mary watched by her husband's bed, but this seemed the longest and dreariest of them all. Again and again had she sent down to ask if any tidings had come of her lost child, and as often received the same dreary reply :—“No, nothing had been heard.”

At last, she could endure the suspense no longer. The sick man had fallen into a heavy sleep, apparently, only broken now and then by restless moaning, and tossing his hands from side to side. Then she rang the bell very softly, and waited outside the door till the servant came.

“Jane,” she said, “I can bear it no longer; I must go out into the open air, if but for a few minutes. You take my place, very softly; don't speak to him if you can help it; but if he wakes, give him a wine-glass full of the medicine by his bedside. And, if you want me, bring the lamp from the corner, and set it on the table close to the window. I shall be on the watch, and see it at once, and will be with you in two minutes.”

Then she crept softly downstairs. All was very quiet and still as she passed through the hall; and on the door-mat lay Sandie, her little terrier, curled up and fast asleep. But he heard and knew his mistress's step in a moment, and instantly sat up on his hind legs, and begged to go with her.

“All right, Sandie, you shall go; but, mind” (holding up her fingers as she spoke), “you must be very quiet, and not bark. Now—quiet! Sandie, quiet!”

She opened the great hall-door, and stepped out into the cool fresh air. The moon was up, and the whole sky was bright with a thousand stars, as Mary walked quickly across the garden to the avenue. Then, under the tall, black trees, she stood still for a moment to think; looking up at the glorious summer sky, stretching, like the palace of the Great King, above the waving branches. A soft breath of air moved along the tree-tops, and sounded like soft and solemn music as it rose and fell upon the quiet night. The stillness, the beauty, and the freshness of the dewy air, in spite of all her trouble, seemed to enter her very heart, and a breath of new peace for a moment rested upon her.

As for Sandie, he conducted himself in the most admirable and exemplary manner, walking soberly and demurely by her side, or

stopping as she stopped, and looking up into her face as much as to say—

“All right, my dear mistress, Sandie is here, and on the lookout, though it’s hard to guess what you are doing out here, at this time of night. But what can he do for you?”

She did not stroll far from the house, but keeping within clear view of the window, where the faint spot of light just visible showed that all was going on well, paced up and down in the soft moonlight. And her one thought was, “O my child, my child!” All at once, however, Sandie gave a low whine, and then a short, little, cry, as if in doubt about some knotty point.

Mary instantly stopped and listened; but could hear nothing amiss. The quiet, midnight song of earth to heaven was rising up into the blue depths of air; the leafy boughs and dewy flowers silently praising Him that made them; but all else seemed at peace, as before.

“Quiet, Sandie, good dog, quiet.”

Whereupon Sandie cocked his ears, and trotted on again; as if more happy in his mind.

But it was only for a few minutes. Presently came the same little whining cry, but this time more loudly and plainly. Then Mary knew that there was something amiss, or something stirring which the dog could not understand; and she walked quickly back towards the house. On the gravel-path, in front of the porch, she paused, and once more listened; and then for the first time heard a faint, far-off sound, as of wheels upon a gritty road. But still far, very far away.

In an instant Sandie darted from her side, and was off as hard as he could go, creeping through the garden gate, and away swiftly down the lane to the turnpike road. And still his mistress stood there, and looked with straining eyes into the darkness beyond the gate; her heart beating wildly with hope and fear; one moment alive with joy, at the next all but fainting with dread. Then came a rustle among the plants by the hedge, and out dashed Sandie once more, no longer sober and demure, but frantic with excitement, running round and round the grass-plot, dancing, tearing to and fro, as if mad for very joy. But, in the very midst of his joy, uttering not a single bark or cry.

Nearer and nearer came the sound of wheels; now on the open, hard, road; now in the winding lane; and, now, at last, at the garden gate. But not a step could Mary stir. Her feet seemed frozen to the ground. She looked with longing eyes, and dimly made out a carriage as it drew up at the gate, saw two people get out, and then come slowly up the path to where she stood. It seemed like a dream to her.



But, then, suddenly, the mother's love out-mastered all the passion of hope and fear, and with swift steps she flew to meet them. In another moment, she had her child in her arms, and was kissing him with all the rapture that only a mother can know.

"All safe and well, Mrs. Stone," said a man's voice; "safe and well, thank God, and sound asleep."

"Who are you?" she cried eagerly, "who are you that I may say, '*God bless you for ever,*' for bringing back my child?"

"Here is Fanny, your nurse, who will tell you all her adventures; and I——"

"Ah!" she answered eagerly, "I know you now. You are from St. Padron's. You first gave me hope in my trouble before, and now you come to give me new life. Come in, come in, and rest."

Of Fanny she seemed not to take the least notice. Then they quietly unlatched the hall-door, and all went softly into the house. Luckily, there was a fire burning in the kitchen, and to that as the most cheery room Fanny at once led the way: the mother still trembling, and the two travellers half fearing that she would break down for very joy.

"Get some brandy," whispered Penfold, "or she will faint, directly." It was soon got, and a dose administered.

"You *must* take it," said Penfold, "consider what you have got to do, even to-night; go, now, put your son into his cot; then up stairs to the sick man. Meanwhile we will wait."

In ten minutes she came back with a quiet look of intense happiness on her face, that spoke more loudly than words.

"Charley is fast asleep," she said, "and my husband just as I left him half-an-hour ago. Fanny, you shall tell me all to-morrow. Go, now, and care for my boy. You see, I trust him to you once more."

Then she kissed her tenderly—and Fanny went up stairs with happy tears in her eyes, and joy in her heart.

"Nobly and bravely done," said Penfold, as the door closed, and the two were alone. "To-night, Mrs. Stone has been the sharpest trial in all your sorrow, and you have borne it bravely and well. Now, if you will permit me, I must tell you that poor girl's story; for, as it chances, I know it all, and it is better that you should know it to-night from me, and so be ready for to-morrow, bring what it may. If your husband is still conscious, I should like to see him, if but for a moment. He was once my old companion, and now God has brought him very low—it may be for me to say a word of hope even to him."

"God bless you for all your goodness," replied Mary; and this

was all she could say, for her heart was now very full. Then, sitting by the crackling wood fire, she sat and listened to the story of her boy's escape, and of Fanny's return to her father's cottage, which there is no need to repeat.

"And now," added Penfold, when the story was done, "go and get an hour's sleep; your servant, you say, can be trusted; and sleep you must have, or you will utterly break down before the day comes. As for me, I will wrap myself up in this great pilot-coat, and, in the great arm-chair by the fire, I shall be sound asleep in five minutes. The doctor, you say, will be here early; and then perhaps your husband will see me."

And so they parted for the night.

Strangely enough, it was to be the last night of Mary's watching.

Morning soon came, and in due time the doctor, who in his turn was amazed to find Penfold waiting his arrival, and still more amazed to hear all he had to tell.

After a visit to the sick man, he came hurriedly back to the breakfast room where Penfold waited.

"He is sinking, Penfold, fast; he has for days past been dying by inches of utter exhaustion; and now the end is near. I have just given him another dose of brandy, and he may last an hour or two. Oddly enough, too, he seems more conscious than usual; he knew Mary just now, and knew his boy. Come up and see him."

When they got into the room, the wife was kneeling down by the bedside, the little child standing by her, and holding her fast by her dress. Frank Stone was lying, propped up with pillows, very still, and very pale, with one hand clasping his child's tiny fingers.

"Frank," said his wife, "there's an old friend come to see you!"

"Who is it, Mary? All dark to me; I can't see him now. All dark."

"Yes," said Penfold, as he knelt down, "all dark, but there is Light beyond, Stone."

"I can't see it," answered the dying man in slow, broken accents; "I can't see it. But they've been very good to me. All of them. Fanny, O, Fanny! have pity on me! Where is Mary? Give me your hand. It will not be long, now, Mary. You have been '*Sunshine*' to me. Tired, so tired, Charley—are you there, boy? Don't hate me, Charley. I have been a bad father to you—take care of mamma. Is there—is—there—light for me, old friend? Can you all forgive me?"

"There is light for all, Stone. It is God's gift. It's *His* Love that is now touching your heart; *His* Light that is breaking. There is no darkness with him."

"*God have mercy upon me,*" murmured the faint voice. "Mary, forgive——"

These were the last words that Stone spoke on earth; and so, amid the prayers of those who knelt by his bedside, he slowly passed away from the darkness into the Light—to the presence of the just and merciful Judge, "who weigheth in the true balance, and findeth a grain of wheat, may be, where men see nought but chaff."\*

In those just and merciful Hands we must leave him.

Within a week from that day father and son were both buried in one grave. Three-fourths of the parish were present to see the old Squire laid in his last resting-place on earth, and much of the love and pity due to the old man fell to the share of the son, thus cut off in the prime of his years, though few of the mourners knew to what bitter cause his untimely death was owing.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### HOME AT LAST.

"——— Revenge, at first thought sweet,  
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils."

MILTON.

THE day after Frank Stone's death was a sad and dreary one to all at the Farm. The weary watching by the bed-side of the sick man was now over, and all its attendant anxiety, doubt, and fear, were at an end; but the strings that had been stretched so tight, suddenly flew back far beyond their original, normal position, and Mary for the first time knew the full sharpness of the trial through which she had just passed. The exhaustion and fatigue—unfelt in the time of actual suffering—now came back with renewed force, and for many days she could do little else than watch her boy at play in the nursery, or on the grass-plot.

Her strength seemed to have died out.

On the morning of her husband's death, she had, at Fanny's earnest request, again heard all the story of her boy's escape in the boat on the previous night, and frankly and freely forgiven what there was to forgive. And it cost her little to do this, as joy at her child's safety now swallowed up all other feelings.

"Six months ago, Fanny," she said, "I should have given you a good scolding for getting into a boat with Charley at all, however well secured, and however safe; but now, Fanny, I have only one thought,—'he is safe;' thank God. And your way more plainly than ever lies homeward; when there is no longer any-



thing to bind you here. God himself has broken the chain that we called so grievous, and were so eager to revenge. It has been a long, dark, and bitter shadow that *he* passed through; though not of our making or devising; and a sharp trial for me. Yes, my girl, I know it,—and a sharp trial for you, too. But it is over now, Fanny, and it will be better for us to part.”

Then there was a silence.

“Let me see him once more, ma’am, before I go?”

To this Mary made no answer, but the two women went upstairs together to the silent and darkened room, in which already held sway the silent majesty of death. There, on the well-known bed,—there, in outward guise, lay he who had brought on them both so many a day of sorrow. The indescribable stillness and peace of the whole scene shot like an arrow into their very hearts. He lay with his arms crossed on his breast, his head thrown back on a pillow, and a smile of ineffable beauty and tenderness beaming from every feature of the marble countenance. All sign of suffering, every trace of earthly baseness, every touch of dross, had passed away, as if the mortal shrine had been cleansed and purified when the spirit took its flight. It was like, and yet most unlike, the man they had known; no longer alive,—for they felt that the soul was gone from him; and yet, not dead, for there was still about him a greatness and a presence which belong to life. It was the imperishable stamp of the Creator on His own handy work; man made in the image of God; going down into the dust, and yet alive for ever.

Neither of the women spoke a word. But Fanny, kneeling softly down by the bed-side for a moment, as if afraid to wake the sleeper, covered her face with her hands, and prayed in her heart. Then she rose up quietly, took a small bunch of flowers from her bosom, and laid them between the icy fingers that were unconscious of her loving care. And then, again, she looked at Mary, picked a small spray from the bunch, divided it into two portions, and offering one to her mistress, took the other for herself.

Then the door was locked once more, and without another word, Fanny went down into the nursery to pack her box.

Her hardest task was to part with the boy; but it was over at last, and then she had to say good-bye to his mother. Little was spoken on either side. Both felt the bitterness of parting—but both felt that the time was come.

“God bless and be with you, ma’am,” cried the poor girl, in the fulness of her heart, “for all your love and goodness to me. You were good to me, when many would have been bitter enough; and have been good to me now, when I brought fresh trouble upon you: when you had sorrow enough already. And if ever the day

comes when you want help that I can give, it'll be a joy to me to do it. St. Padron's is not far off, and there you'll find me for many a day to come."

In reply, Mary could say little; but she kissed her child's nurse tenderly, and held up Charley in her arms to have one more last kiss, and to wave his hand from the nursery window as the dog-cart rattled quickly down the dusty road.

"Some day, Fanny, some day I shall come and see you."

And thus the two women, whose lives had been for a time so strangely cast together, were now as strangely and suddenly parted.

Fanny had avoided taking leave of the servants at the Farm, for the events of the few previous days had been too exciting and too intense to admit of any sympathy on their part; and of their suspicious looks and suspicious words, she had already experienced more than enough.

Her ride to St. Padron's with Sam, therefore, she looked forward to with dread. But, on the whole, he was very merciful. Fanny, indeed, had always been in some sort a favourite with him because she had partly diverted the attentions of the young tea-dealer from the pretty housemaid. For the first mile the conversation merely touched on the dust and the heat. Then it flagged and died out. But at last Sam grew desperate.

"Sad business, this, Miss Fanny; the old Squire and young master both on 'em gone, as I may say, like a bit of chaff."

"Both, Sam? Is the old Squire gone too?"

"This morning, early, so I heard; just as I was a rubbing down old Jerry. And it's a good master he've a lost, that he have. Why, bless 'e, he's quite off his feed, is that hoss. Nothin' like a hoss for showing his grief. As sensible as a Christian, that he is."

"But is it true, Sam? I've only just parted with Mrs. Frank, and she never said a word of the old man's death. Are you sure?"

"Quite sure; but very like Jane hadn't told her missis the bad news, just yet; and, surely, she's got enough to last her for days to come yet; what with Master's being suddenly took, and then young Master Charley's bein' all but gone. That's a tidy lot altogether. But it's here to-day and gone to-morrow with all of us, Miss Fanny; and the likeliest hoss gets scratched afore the race starts."

After which profound and affecting bit of moralising, Mr. Sam, by a dexterous cut of his whip, flicked a fly off the neck of the bay mare in front of him, and drove on in silence. But it was only for a time the silence lasted. Sam had plainly something on his mind, of which it was necessary that he should be clearly delivered. In fact, just before he started, cook had called him into her pan-

try, and charged him, with much emotion, to find out "all that young woman's game about Master Charley; and when he got to St. Padron's, all that could be discovered as to the story there."

And he had said, "All right, my dear; you leave she\* to me."

The young woman had accordingly been left to him, and now they were driving through Sandymouth streets, and he had found out nothing, literally nothing. His only plan, he thought, therefore, would be to plunge boldly into the middle of affairs. And thus he started:

"That was a coldish night of yours for a sail down the river, Miss Fanny."

"Cold?—oh, not at all cold, Sam; but I'd rather not talk about it, thank you."

"It was a very near shave for young Master Charley, though; and they said that,—at least most of 'em said, that you'd bolted right off with him, out of—"

So far Fanny had let him run on, but now she turned round, and looked him full in the face.

"*They?*" she repeated. "*Who* dared to say any such infamous things of me? Who are *they?*"

The sharp, eager tone in which she spoke, and the flashing eyes which looked straight into his, were more than he could stand.

"Don't 'e be angry," he cried, "Miss Fanny; I really didn't mean no harm. But young gells will be gells, you see, and will talk, bless 'e; they'd talk about their own people, the very same way."

"Yes, yes, I dare say they would, Sam; but that's no reason why they should chatter falsehoods about me. I tell you now, that what you've heard is all false; you're a man, and can contradict it. I shall look to you, as my friend, to do it. Let 'em talk about their own people and things just as they like; but leave me and mine alone."

After this, the mare seemed to demand all Mr. Sam's undivided attention, for he uttered not another word till they got to Sutton-Pool turnpike gate, on the border of St. Padron's parish, where he and old Betty Garly the "pikeman" exchanged "Good marnin'," and in two minutes the dog-cart pulled up at Miller's cottage door.

Boxes and bundles were soon handed out of the cart, with the help of the two young fishermen; Fanny shook hands with Sam, and wished him Good-bye with the air of a mistress rather than a fellow-servant, and so there was an end of all his dreams of discovery at St. Padron's.

"By jingo," he muttered to himself along the dusty road, "that's the gell to take a rise out of a fellow. No wonder that

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\* "She," pure Devonshire for "her."



she bowled over the young tea-dealer," he said to cook that night, at supper; "why I was like nothing at all to her, this morning, myself, when the old man and his two great swabs of fishermen come out to the gate to meet her, as if she was Princess of Wales."

"Well, well," replied the housemaid, "she've had one tumble a'ready, and perhaps she'll be down again before long. Them fine missuses soon gets stuck up, but it don't take much to bring 'em to book. As for our young master's caring a straw for such a hupstart of a thing—for my part, I don't believe it, nor won't."

"Not believe dear Mr. Carter?" says Sam, in scornful accents; "that would be very rude."

"Mr. Carter's a very good-looking, tidy young man, Mr. Samuel, but he's nothin' to me that I knows of, and I don't see why I'm bound to take all he say as gospel."

"No, my dear," interposes Cook; "certainly not; and some people requires more than gospel before they'll take it in; they do, I must say that. Young Carter's a very decent young man, though, and he do say that he heered it from a party that uses the 'Rose an' Crown,' where Jim, the deaf ostler, so they says, drove 'em out in a chay together to Bickleigh. I don't know what you wants more certain than that, for my part."

"But I can't see at all now," replies the sceptical young woman, "what a deaf ostler's got to do with it. Who did he drive out to Bickleigh, and what for, and when?"

"O," says Sam, "I can't go through the whole catechism in that style. It's no good turning to me. You must try cook, perhaps she's up to questions and answers of that sort; or wait till Mr. Carter comes out again. He's the chap for 'why and because.'"

How much further, or more angrily, the conversation might have proceeded, it is hard to say, but luckily at that moment the bell summoned the housemaid to her mistress's room; Sam had to look after his horses for the night; and cook, being sleepy, went off to bed.

For a time, until the double funeral was over, this knotty question therefore slumbered. New dresses—though of a sable hue, and crape in their bonnets, occupied the two ladies for many days, and all the various kinds of fashionable mourning formed the one subject of kitchen conversation.

Not that there was much grief in that cozy apartment, or in the hearts of the two ladies who rejoiced in new bonnets. Mr. Frank Stone, their late master, was not the man to propitiate the good will of his servants, much less to win their affections. He paid good wages, and there was enough to eat and to drink; but, when angry, as Sam said, "he treated 'em like dirt," and it was his pleasure to be angry nearly every day.

So that when the day of the funeral at length arrived, Mary had little sympathy in her sorrow from her own household—unless it were from Sandie, who was in a sad state of restless inquietude the whole morning. But her father had driven over early from Langford, bringing Fitzgerald with him, and these two had of course undertaken to see all necessary things done. The two funeral cortèges were to meet at the churchyard, and though the old Squire's wife was too far overcome with grief to be able to attend, Mary herself insisted on being present at the service.

"My dear," said the doctor, "it is not usual, I assure you, and there is no need whatever for you to be present."

"Never mind, papa, what is usual. I must be there, and intend to be there. So please don't scold me. You know all I have gone through during the past few weeks, and I feel that my place is with you to-day."

This ended all argument; and the ghastly solemnities of burial, in the strictest Protestant sense, were all duly accomplished.

Those were the days when funerals were *performed* in the ripest and fullest sense of the word. At an early hour in the morning two mutes, each holding in his hand a plumed staff, had stationed themselves on either side of the hall door, clothed in deep sable, tallow-faced, with noses faintly tipped with red, and eyes fixed on the ground. About half-an-hour before the arrival of the hearse came a small army of similar sable, tallow-faced attendants, who manœuvred on the gravel walk in front of the house, as a flock of crows hover over the site of some expected prey. Then came the hearse, to carry away, in its gloomy depths, the miserable dust and ashes; be-tasselled and plumed, and in all the splendour of gorgeous sepulchral pride; with plumed and caparisoned horses, a red-faced, bottle-nosed charioteer, and a second detachment of hungry crows, also bearing in their hands batons tipped with brass.

With all this empty and ghastly buffoonery, there is scarcely need to say that poor Mary had nothing to do. She had, indeed, no voice in the matter.

Immediately after the death of her son, the old lady at the Manor House had herself written to Mary a few hurried lines in which she said, "My dear, I specially wish you to leave all the funeral arrangements for the dear departed to me. You may be sure that everything shall be done that our dear ones could wish."

Unlimited orders for a highly respectable gent's funeral had been sent to Mr. Loam, the undertaker at Sandymouth; and the result was what we have just noted.

It was a sad and dreary day to poor "Little Sunshine," but the dreariest and saddest part of all was this mockery of all real sorrow, at the very door of her house, all the way to church, in the sacred building itself, and at the grave-side.

"Mamma," said Charley, that morning, peeping slyly out of the nursery window, "Mamma, there are two of them there, with black flags round their hats, and long sticks in their hands, both looking at their shoes; and every now and then one says something to the other, and then they both laugh. What are they for, mamma?"

"They're the men, Charley, that belong to the funeral."

"But what are they for, mamma? Are they going to put papa into the box, like they did when little Sam the stable-boy died? He only had old Sally to put him in; and I'm sure he—"

"My dear Charley, come away from the window; and don't talk any more now, I've got a head-ache."

"Very well, mamma, I won't; but I say! there's a whole lot more chaps come, now, with bunches of feathers in their hands, and sticks with brass tops; I say, mamma, what *are* they going to do?"

To these and a score of such other questions Mary found it hard enough to give answers that would at all satisfy the enquiring mind of her little son. To try and impress him with the fact that it was a day of sorrow and solemn gloom was worse than useless. The boy knew that the sick father was about to be put into that box, carried away, and buried in Encomb churchyard. But the fact was no real sorrow to him, except that it was making mamma look sad. He who was gone had been no real father to him. The child had never had a chance of knowing or loving his father, and he was far too true and real a son of Mary's to pretend to feel grief of which he was not conscious.

"I say, mamma, I'm very sorry, you know; and I wish it was all over, and all those horrid men gone away with that great black carriage. I know you don't like it. And don't let them put you into the box, mind, or grandpapa, or Doctor Fitzgerald."

Then, very soon, the cheery old doctor and his young partner had arrived; after which, there was a great deal more of question and answer; and at last the cavalcade set out—the great black waggon, and the black coaches filled with servants, and a long train of labourers on foot. And so, by degrees, the funeral obsequies were all finally accomplished in their due order, and the soul of Mr. Loam was satisfied, as he rode back to Sandymouth on the top of the waggon that night, and reflected with complacency on the funeral charges that would some day have to be settled.

Father and son were at length resting side by side in one grave—two goodly and brave lives, both wrecked, the one in its old age, the other in its prime, by the fault and folly of a man, who, growing up in selfishness, had no pity for others, and little for himself, and went down into the dust unwept and all but dishonoured, save by a fond and foolish mother.



## LIVING DUST.

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PROFESSOR TYNDAL was quite right in making us all uncomfortable about the air we breathe, though it was rather depressing to find that so genteel a place as the lecture-room of the Royal Institution was filled, not with pure air, 21 parts oxygen, and 79 parts nitrogen, and a reasonable percentage, say 1 in 2000, of carbonic acid, but with what in the illuminated focus of the electric beam looked a good deal like a semi-solid. Faugh! did I ever breathe such stuff as that? you said, to yourself, as you saw the absolute dirt,—not half so interesting as “the motes in a sunbeam,” though it’s not very pleasant to think of breathing even them,—revealed by the powerful light thrown on a line of air. Yes, you are breathing that, or something like it, at all hours; and you may be very thankful that the solid particles which saturate the air, so to speak, are for the most part harmless.

In spite of all the mischief done to knife-grinders, builders, sweeps, stone-cutters, and others, by the dust which they are compelled to take in, it will probably be found that, speaking generally, the harmless dust is inorganic, the harmful organic. How much organic dust there is in the atmosphere about us is shown by Dr. Tyndal’s way of cleansing the air which he wanted to use in his experiments on light. He made it red-hot, and then found that it contained no dust at all. Now, had the dust been inorganic, heating would not have got rid of it; he therefore concluded that it was organic, composed of minute plants or animals, or plant-animals, if so you please to style them.

Dust is bad enough; an accumulation of it on the lungs is (as too many handicraftsmen know,) the origin of many diseases. But living dust is much worse; because, like other living things, it will increase and multiply, if it finds what the learned call a *nidus*—a nest, a suitable place to breed and hatch in. Moreover, living dust, though it can eat monstrously when it has the chance, is gifted with a strangely elastic appetite. It can go on fasting for an unlimited period, and still keep its feeding powers in readiness for the moment when there shall be an opportunity of falling to. The “germ” of scarlet-fever, for instance, is undoubtedly organic; yet it will linger in clothes or carpets, or wall-papers, with a

vitality almost as tenacious as that of mummy-wheat, till somebody comes in its way who is "susceptible," *i. e.* in a fit state to catch the infection. Living dust is very hard to kill. Dr. Tyndal says that a good deal of it escapes the action even of caustic soda and pure sulphuric acid. We all know that certain vapours such as those of chlorine, of phenole (alias carbolic acid), and of burning brimstone, are great "disinfectors." Satan, who has worries enough of other kinds, must be spared the plague of living dust, because the "minute organisms" could not exist in the vapour of sulphurous acid which the prince of darkness is usually supposed to breathe. Condyl's Fluid, too, or permanganate of potash is good, by virtue of its being so rich in oxygenous substances; but being a fluid, it is not of much use in dealing with dust in the air. No: "roast your air," says Dr. Tyndal; or, as you cannot do that at all times, wear a respirator made of charcoal between layers of cotton wool when you go into swamps, or London alleys, or Glasgow wynds, or into one of our law-courts, or into a church where all the windows are shut and the gas is blazing freely and a favourite preacher has drawn a full house. Of course, we don't expect that anybody (except a few wise doctors, and some old aunts whose nephews have reasons to wish they would take less care of themselves) will follow Dr. Tyndal's advice. Still one does like to know what one ought to do. One feels that this purifying effect of fire is the great reason that has made it sacred in so many mythologies—that the feeling which made Hindoos, and Greeks, and Romans burn their dead, which made Jews and Canaanites pass their children through the fire, and which sends Highland and Cornish folk and simple villagers in central France dancing wildly round the Midsummer bonfire, is just that which the doctor realised when he found his red-hot air was dustless.

We don't think people will take to cotton-wool respirators, especially since to be of any use they would have to come over noses as well as mouths, any more than they have abjured water because of the ugly monsters that the old oxyhydrogen microscope at the Polytechnic used to shew us frolicking about in a single drop. But, no doubt, since the microscope was first shewn, people have grown more careful what they drink; and in like manner Dr. Tyndal's display of dust will make them more careful what they breathe. Brimstone will be burned more freely; carbolic acid and chloride of lime will be scattered about with a philosophic disregard of smells which sometimes make the remedy seem worse than the disease; and, by-and-by, when we've got London under good government, and settled the cab difficulty, and brought our railways under state control, and stopped the adulteration of food, and done a few more little matters which have been due

for years and must be cleared off before the century rolls over, we shall perhaps attain to such a perfect state that, when we go for "change of air," we shall take a testing apparatus with us.

Fancy paterfamilias, before he decides on taking mamma and the young folks down to Smelton on the Ooze, running over with his vibroscope and his sensitive ozone-paper. Why should not people test air as they do water? Why should it not be thought, by-and-by, as rash to go into untested air, as we now think it for Hindoos, who always talk of "going for change of water," to drink of their filthy tanks without any attempt at filtering?

But why, on the other hand, should we need all this care and all these contrivances? Our fathers got on very well without them. Did they, though? We know that they did not live so long as we do; if the average of life had not increased ever since the old Northampton tables were computed, the assurance companies would be in a worse case than they are. The sickly babies too were far seldomer reared than they now are. And yet life was not so full; it was not such a strain on the system as it is now. Men didn't travel up every day from Brighton or Tunbridge Wells, by express, conning the morning paper as they came. Those were the days of "grand old leisure." And if men had any extraordinary work to get through in a short space of time, why they recklessly "kept themselves up to the mark" with port and brandy,—a proceeding which "paid" for the moment, but for which we their children suffer, which is one of the reasons, in fact, why we cannot stand so well as we otherwise might against dust, living and dead.

Sad days those. Everyone knows how Pitt, night after night, went down primed with port; the House depended on him, and he depended on his bottle, or rather on his two bottles; but not so many know how the House was once adjourned, simply because it could not help it, and all through port wine. The story is this: Mr. Kearsley, an Essex M.P., was not the soberest man in the world, and he had been dining with a lot of young members who had made him take a good deal more than he could carry. They walked with him into the House, set him on his legs, and cheered vociferously as he began a noisy incoherent and altogether scatter-brained harangue. Hereupon uprose Mr. Paul Methuen, solemnest of men, and called on Mr. Speaker to bring the hon. member to order. But before Mr. Speaker had time to do anything, Kearsley saw what was coming, and (though his aiders and abettors, now rather ashamed, were tugging at his coat-tails,) he put on a face of the most inimitable mock gravity, and cried to Methuen, in deprecatory tones, "Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou me?" The House roared, and roared again, and began roaring when every-



body thought "order had been restored." There was Kearsley's face and the echo of his appealing voice; and so, it being hopeless to get any business done, *solvuntur tabulæ risu* was literally exemplified; they adjourned. Which little digression has taken us away from the living dust on which we mean to speak, and which we divide into animal and vegetable.

*Microzoaires* and *Microphytes*, the French naturalists call them; the latter being fungi of all sorts—"mould" of course included, and arising during alcoholic or acid fermentation, the former (called bacteriums, vibriones, and monads,) showing themselves when the fermentation becomes putrid or ammoniacal. Probably the distinction cannot be rigidly maintained; for the two kinds of life pass strangely into one another, and some of the "organisms" seem veritable links between them. Both, again, are *protean*, as it is called, in character; that is, the shape under which they grow up varies from causes which we can in most cases not even guess at.

They tell us that the grubs of queen, soldier, and workman ants are all precisely the same; so that the difference there seems due to a different kind of food and treatment. But why two "protoplasms" should turn out quite different kinds of vibrios or fungi, as the case may be, is not by any means so clear. Of the two, perhaps the vegetable organisms, the microscopic fungi, are the most widely diffused.

*Microzoa*, indeed, are found in most unexpected places: we have them in our mouths; their carcasses are said to form the "tartar" on our teeth, just as the carcasses of some of their brethren form coral islands, and those of others form the animal earth which is eaten in Sweden and other hungry quarters. But, then, microscopic fungi thrive in such still more unlikely *niduses* as white-lead and strychnine, and one (the *protococcus Atlanticus*) covers square miles of sea with a bright red carpet. A whole group of fungi, microscopic at first, but sometimes growing to a large size, attack the different kinds of corn. There is the ergot of rye, a great pest in France, where rye is so much grown on poor lands that won't carry a wheat crop. It causes a sort of gangrene or bad ulcer in the joints, especially of the fingers. Fortunately, in 1845 a chemist of Chambéry discovered that *ergotine*, the active principle of the fungus, is a powerful blood-stancher, having the property of stopping bleeding without clogging the veins. Since then its use in medicine has so increased that the self-interest of the farmer leads him to carefully separate the infected ears from the sound ones—the former are worth ten times as much as the latter.

There seems no certain way of getting rid of ergot, which, like other plagues, varies in amount from year to year. Mildew, a

microscopic fungus chiefly attacking wheat, a particular kind of which is the "black smut," gives way to deep drainage; seed affected with it is curable by being steeped in lime-water or treated with sulphur—ways recommended so long ago by Virgil in his *Georgics*, when he was showing how seeds are to be kept good.

Very probably the bad effects of "smutty" wheat on men and animals are exaggerated; for in Mexico a parasitic fungus of the same kind, growing in the maize, is actually employed as food under the name of *cuervo* (*corvus*, crow—because of its colour). However this may be, the French believe that the horrible skin-disease called *pellagre*, so common among the ill-fed poor of the Landes, and other southern districts is due to eating flour from maize on which has grown a fungus called *verdet*.

Other plants suffer, besides "cereals." The potato-rot was undoubtedly caused by a microscopic parasite; and the potato-rot, be it remarked, caused almost as much misery elsewhere—in Russia, for instance—as it did in Ireland. The number of souls in Eastern Europe who depend on this tuber is prodigious. Popular German songs are full of allusions to it: "So through life we trudge along, and grub up our potatoes," is the burden of many a folk's ditty. The French Celt never took, happily for him, so thoroughly to what Cobbett well calls "a soul-degrading root," as to live wholly upon it. In one of those wonderful Erckmann-Châtريان novels we are told how the root was first introduced—by a Huguenot book-hawker, who brought a few shrivelled seed-potatoes over the frontier after a tramp into Hanover. He could only persuade one man to plant any. "Heretics' food" the rest of the villagers called them. And even when they had tasted them, and had seen what a wonderful yield they gave, they didn't "take to them"—a good thing for France, as we said, in the long run, seeing that a moderate population well fed on bread and wine is better than a swarm brought up on potatoes and butter-milk.

Another kind of vegetable dust is the *oidium*, "*oidium Tuckeri*," the French call it, and always assert that it was first developed in those hothouses in which we, luckless inhabitants of a sunless clime, try to ripen a few grapes for ourselves. Fortunately the old *oidium* is pretty well mastered; but there are new diseases,—notably one attacking the vine roots, which looks very threatening both to the French producer and to the English consumer. It is as yet chiefly confined to the Rhone valley and the Gironde. We hear (*horrendum dictu*) of hectare after hectare, in the department of the Gard, where the vines are all dead, and are being pulled up and sold for firewood. In the Vaucluse department, and about Tarascon, and the old Roman towns of Arles and Orange, two-thirds of the vineyards are ruined—sad, for those who have got

used (thanks to Mr. Gladstone) to the strong, cheap, red wines of the South, the most satisfactory for a poor man to import for his own drinking.

This new disease attacks the roots, like the *blanquet*, of which the white *mycelium* (as botanists call the filaments, or "spawn," of a fungus) is so well known to any one who has walked through a vineyard. But of the new disease nothing organic can be seen with the naked eye; it is literally "living dust." After many conjectures, a good microscope showed that the roots affected were covered with minute aphides of a yellowish colour. The creature has been christened *phylloxera vastatrix*; and, mysteriously as such plagues are (we know) connected with meteorological conditions, its appearance is laid to the charge of the cold winter of 1868, preceded by an unusual drought, and followed by a terribly hot and dry summer. The size of these destructive insects may be judged from the fact that 200 of their eggs ranged end to end don't make an inch. The rate at which they multiply is so prodigious, that one female would lay twenty-five thousand millions of eggs between March and October.

The grand difficulty in dealing with the *phylloxera* (or the oil-stain, as the peasants call it), is that it works underground, beginning first with the small fibres of the root. All the ordinary antiseptics seem of no avail; people talk of grafting their vines on the *cissus orientalis*, a plant of the same family, which the pest does not touch; or on the *espagnin* and the *colombeau*, two kinds of vine which, strangely enough, it leaves untouched. But the only feasible cure seems to be to drown the creature by flooding the vineyards, a sufficiently difficult process where these are on a hill-side. Anyhow, a vast amount of mischief has been done; and mischief to vines is not made up in a single year.

Animal dust, then, proves at least as destructive as the vegetable dust, or oïdium, did a few years ago. But wine is not safe even after it has been well got into cask. In the first place, you never can be sure your cask was quite clean, unless you killed out the fungi by rinsing it with diluted sulphuric acid, in which, too, you should steep your corks if you want to keep your wine from all risk of being "corked." Be sure, by the way, to wash off all the acid after it has done its work. But, supposing your cask perfectly clean, you never can control fermentation. It depends on so many circumstances. How do you know that some blight was not abroad when your wine was made, and that consequently things won't go on as they ought in cask or bottle?

Appert, one of those poor men who make other people's fortunes, pointed out in 1830, the value of heat in "ripening" wine, *i.e.*, in preventing excessive fermentation. It was he who started



the plan now used by Crosse and Blackwell, and scores of other firms, of preserving meat, fruit, vegetables, and so on, by standing them in hot water, and hermetically sealing them. He was, in fact, the inventor of all the now indispensable "tins."

Well, owing to some custom-house worry connected with the new Belgian kingdom, which was bound to support its native beer, a heavy tax was laid on French wines; and this terrified the Burgundy growers, for the finer kinds of Burgundy had always been "impatient of carriage," some had actually to be drunk where they were grown; none would bear a sea voyage; Belgium, therefore, being close by, was the chief market for Beaune and its fellow wines. "What shall we do" (said a grower of Beaune to Appert), "now that we are cut off from Belgium? Try if you can't find a plan for making our wines transportable." So Appert took some bottles of Beaune, and, leaving room for expansion, while at the same time he corked them hermetically, he put them into hot water, which he raised to about 80 degrees Fahr. He then kept some at home, sent some to Havre, and shipped some to St. Domingo, and had it brought back. At two years' end he found he had three qualities, all sound; the heating had secured that; the wine which had made the long voyage being far the best, better than any of the same stock had ever been before.

Appert, however, was a poor man, who had to work for the shops at jam-making and meat-potting, and could not afford to buy a lot of wine, and wait two or three years before he could sell it. His plan was forgotten, till it was revived the other day by M. Pasteur, who has not only ripened crude wines and cured sick wines by heat, but has proved that "sickness," and all the other ills that bottled wine is subject to, are caused by fungi more or less microscopic.

Some of these evils, being signs of age, have come to be esteemed virtues. "Dry old wine," when looked at through the microscope, seems to be full of branches of dead wood; and "rich oily wine" shews, under the same truth-telling medium, long strings of globules, massed together in a very unpleasant-looking manner. These fungi all seem harmless enough; so are the "moulds" which come out on jam, for M. Cordier, practical as all French *savans* are, ate up one day all the mould on a pot of raspberry, and, finding no ill effects from it, tried next day that which covered a pot of gooseberry, and then swallowed all the green on a decayed orange—all with impunity. Mouldy bread, however, will cause dizziness (we are told), if you eat too much of it—its direct effect on the stomach, strangely enough, seems *nil*; though certain chickens died after eating a lot of very mouldy sweet biscuits treacherously provided for them by the same amiable M.

Cordier, who makes the edifying remark, that food of all kinds gets rotten very soon, in order to show us that these things are only lent to us, and that nature is in a hurry to get them back again.

If the state of the atmosphere tells on fermentation, it tells no less on grass-bleaching, for instance; too much damp causing the linen to be stained with grey, or brown-green spots, almost impossible to be got out, even by the free use of chlorides. These are seen under the microscope to be masses of furry vegetation. So, too, in making gelatine, sometimes a patch here and there won't "set;" the air has brought some living dust with it, and, putrid fermentation setting in, the whole has to be boiled up over again. Macaroni-makers are worried by the same sort of difficulty—a difficulty which shows that "the state of the atmosphere" means the presence or absence of these "spores," germs of animal or vegetable life, which we have called living dust. The only certain way of avoiding the difficulty is to extend Appert's principle, and pass currents of hot air over your bleaching-linen, your glue as it sets, and your macaroni as it dries.

The amount of disease caused by all these small creatures can, of course, only be guessed at. Some skin affections are exactly analogous to microscopic fungoid growths. At least one form of deafness, caused by living in damp rooms, is assigned to a minute "cryptogam." Dr. Lemaire gives the same cause for some kinds of ophthalmia. "White-gum" and "red-gum" in babies are due to the presence of two species of *oidium*. The mouths of healthy men are the homes of myriads of *microzoa*, and the tartar on the teeth is the accumulation of their carcasses. What we have said about ophthalmia shows the evil of big hospitals, where (after a time) the walls get what Miss Nightingale used to call "saturated with organic matter." It shows the evil, too, of fluffy wall-papers—the very things to collect all sorts of living dust, and to keep it ready till "the coming man" passes by and affords it a *nidus*. The only really healthy house is one with all its walls covered (Hindoo fashion) with chunam, polished almost like marble, and its floors of polished wood, never swept—(how finely sarcastic Miss Nightingale is against sweeping floors)—but wiped over, so as to carry away the "organic matter," instead of mixing it well with the air, and driving it up to the ceiling.

How much air a man must have depends on various circumstances. They say that about four cubic yards in the twenty-four hours will suffice to keep up animal heat; but six times that quantity is the minimum for free respiration. The former amount would be, perhaps, what one might get if one was buried in a snow drift. Where there are several people together, each wants

more than if he was alone—they spoil more than they breathe. Twelve cubic yards per head per hour is not too large an allowance in a schoolroom; and in a theatre there ought to be—(we don't believe there ever was, or ever will be)—twenty-four cubic yards per head per hour. In hospitals the rule is from thirty to seventy cubic yards to ordinary patients, eighty to one hundred for open wounds, one hundred and fifty for epidemic cases—another argument against big hospitals. The cattle plague (which the French are so very proud of having at once stamped out, though they could not quite succeed in keeping it out) is no doubt caused by some sort of “living dust;” this explains the marvellous rapidity of its spread. A drop of matter taken from the eye of a diseased ox, and put into a wound on a sound animal, had in forty-eight hours tainted his whole blood by a sort of leavening process (zymosis). The spores which cause the plague may be bred in the great Russian marshes whence the plague came; for it seems undoubted that marsh or intermittent fever is caused by vegetable spores. The American Dr. Salisbury has caught them flying along the wind, and has thus accounted for the strange fact that at a certain time one border of a marsh may be safe, and the other deadly.

It would be a great thing to get rid of these marsh fever “spores:” we don't suffer much from them in England now, though ague is still remembered with horror. But in Italy they say that every year 60,000 people die in the maremmas—people enough to fill Brazil in a few years. In the tropics we know that two-thirds of the Europeans who die, die from these fevers; but, though you may drain Italian marshes, when the nations of Europe have put a stop to standing armies, and have taken to subdue the ground instead of subduing one another, how are you to do in India, where water is indispensable for vegetation, and where, in some places, if you don't have it in a marsh, you can't have it at all?

Cholera, again, is (they say) due to “living dust.” M. Ernest Hallier says he has found a microscopic fungus on rice, the eating of which was known to have caused the disease. He has watered rice with “cholera secretions,” and has found a fungus, with very brilliant filaments, invade the plant in consequence. Here we see something of the confusion between animal and vegetable, of which we spoke before; for the “sporules” found in the secretions of cholera-patients, and named *cylindrotaeniae*, are living, moving things; yet, when they get rice as their *nidus*, they develop the “mycelium” of a fungus. Knowing that cholera is caused by “living dust,” our doctors may by-and-by grow to make up their minds what is the best way of curing it. At present, we are told, nothing will kill the “spores” while they are inside the human body.



A man can't drink boiling water ; and, except by boiling heat, the creatures are indestructible. They may, however, be readily destroyed in the evacuations ; and this is a great thing towards stopping the spread of cholera. As Dr. Budd, of Bristol, showed, a very large percentage of fresh disease is caused—certainly in the case of cholera, very probably in the case of other diseases—by throwing sick-room discharges into the sewers, which thus become the means of carrying infection from one place to another. “Bury them, or else pass a jet of steam through them,” is his advice. At present our sewers, meant to purify rapidly, often have just the opposite effect.

We have said nothing about trichinæ, whereby a raw-sausage-loving German is eaten alive every now and then, and which are found in terrible quantities in poor Iceland—the most rapidly degenerating of all European countries. Dogs are great breeders of trichinæ, and dogs seem to make themselves too much at home for the general weal in Iceland. Neither have we said anything about cheesemites, the strength and activity of which will not be doubted by those who have seen a piece of rich Cheddar “walk away of itself.” For both trichinæ and mites are not microscopic enough to be classed among living dust ; and they come we know how, not borne on the wind like an epidemic. One word as to the habits of the animal branch of these infinitesimal beings. They are, as we said, universally diffused—in the hottest Arabian sands, and in the ice-brash about the poles. They always have been : our limestone rocks, our chalk cliffs, were “secreted” by them. Some of the strata which they made still retain nitrogenous matter enough to be eatable ; we spoke of the “mountain meal” of Sweden ; the same is found on the barren heaths of Luneburg, and in other places. They are still at work : each coral-polype is a sea-anemone, about the size of a pin's head, with mouth, stomach, &c. Of course these are nothing in diminutiveness compared with the “monads,” of which, we are told, there are sometimes more in a drop of water than there are inhabitants in the whole earth : but of all this “animal dust,” bigger or smaller, one thing is true :—Their hearts are very large—fifty times as big, in comparison, as those of horses or oxen—and therefore their vital power is immense. They never sleep ; their stomachs usually vary from a score or so to (say) a hundred—lined, generally, with sharp teeth. Eating, therefore, is their life's work. What they eat, we shall learn when microscopes are as much better than they are now, as the present microscopes are better than our unassisted eyes. “Micrography,” as they call the science of using the microscope—not so easy a thing, as those know who have tried—is as yet in its infancy. “Living dust” is unwholesome and dis-

agreeable enough ; but we may find out some day that it saves us, by its voracity and assimilating power, from something far worse than itself ; unless, indeed, we come by-and-bye to give up the idea that everything was made for man, and to allow that the delight which a vibrio and a bacterium get out of existence is a sufficient "final cause" for their being created. Of course man is (since he found them out) the sworn enemy of all these minute creatures, animal and vegetable. Extending Lord Palmerston's dictum, "that dust is only matter in the wrong place," man holds that "living dust" has no right to any place at all in this cosmos. He pursues it with "disinfectants" of all kinds, one great class of which—those of which chlorine is the basis—act by chemically decomposing the fermenting masses, and so rendering them harmless. The other class—the antiseptics—don't decompose substances, but kill individuals. Nitric acid is the most active of these (better even than the fumes of brimstone). If you want to purify the wards of a hospital, pour it in large quantities into copper plates, and run away, having beforehand stuffed up every chink by window and door. A red vapour at once rises, which, fatal to man, is fatal too to microzoa and microphytes, and their germs. It has, too, the valuable property of renewing itself—as soon as, by its oxidizing action on the metal, it has lost a part of its own oxygen, it borrows some from the surrounding air, and so goes on till the whole oxygen in the room is exhausted. After forty-eight hours of this process, even the most lively species of living dust will be certain to have succumbed. Ships, naturally, get very unwholesome after a few tropical voyages, even if they have not "contracted the indelible stain of yellow fever." The old way of sweetening them, rarely practised because it is so dangerous, was to char all the inner surface by passing a pan of lighted shavings over the whole inner surface of the hold. Besides burning off the impurities, you thus produce pyroligneous acid (resinous wood-vinegar), a powerful antiseptic. M. Lapparent, inspector-general of French dockyards, has introduced a plan for doing the same thing with gas. He has two vulcanized india-rubber pipes, one bringing gas, the other compressed air ; and, by burning the two together out of a patent double nozzle, he is able to regulate the flame, and to avoid all risk of setting the ship on fire.

As chloride of lime is the commonest disinfectant or decomposer, carbolic acid (phenic acid, the French call it) is the most common antiseptic or destroyer. It is one of the thirty-one products from the distillation of coal in making gas : all these, which include the beautiful aniline dyes, as well as creosote and benzole, used to be thrown away, as so many other valuable things were

till chemistry taught us to make the most of everything. Carbolic acid was first extracted from gas-tar in 1834 by Runge; Laurent soon afterwards more fully investigated its properties and its uses. They are manifold: it is a good caustic when you are bitten by a venomous creature; it is a good drink (1 part to 1000 water) in marshy countries; it is an excellent sheep-wash, killing out scab, which is another evil result of "living dust." If it is injected into wood, it preserves it from the teredo and other destroyers. It is used for washing hides and horns before exportation in Australia and South America. A Frenchman suggests that the intestines of Australian sheep should be treated with it (*cat-gut* mostly comes from the sheep), in order that fiddle-strings may be cheapened, and a love of harmony be more generally diffused. For the human stomach, Dr. Raspail (he was an M.D. as well as a red-republican), who years ago attributed almost all diseases to "living dust," used to recommend black pepper—a remedy which might be attended with unpleasant results of its own.

And now, what is the "moral" of all this? Why, if you won't wear Dr. Tyndal's cotton-wool respirators, nor yet filter your air through flannel screens, as they have to do who try to grow grapes and melons on the tops of London houses, at least you should endeavour to keep down the amount of dust in your houses. Perhaps it is a fortunate thing for us that we burn so much coal, and that therefore a great deal of inorganic, harmless, and possibly antiseptic dust is always about in our houses. For, consider what a *nidus* for microzoa and microphytes, or rather what a multitude of *niduses* an average dining-room of the lower middle class presents. There are the inevitable horse-hair-bottomed chairs, full of the dust of ages; there's the horse-hair sofa—put your hand under the "squab," and, unless it is the usual hiding-place for newspapers, you'll be astonished at the result; there are the backs of the pictures and the chimney-glass, permanently receptacles for any "spores" that may be flying about; there are the walls, probably papered with "handsome red flock," that soon gets "saturated with organic matter," and gives it out as surely as a green flock paper gives out vapour of arsenic; there is the dust on the top of the doors, and on the woodwork to which the curtain-fringe is nailed—dust that escapes all cleanings. Above all, there is the carpet, that specially English luxury, a fixture, cut out to fit the corners, nailed down, and perhaps not lifted up for years; swept indeed at most once a week, in a way which just diffuses the latent plague all over the room, if not over all the house. See what Miss Nightingale, in her "Notes on Nursing," has to say about this plan of sweeping rooms. And this carpet is daily rubbed by boots that have tramped through the omnium gatherum of London mud, that



have crossed open, and stood upon drain, gratings, that are morally sure to bring in in all weathers something organic. Yet we will have our permanent carpet, it is a thoroughly English institution, it is so comfortable, and comfort is essentially an English word; if we had to give it up, we might as well at once go back to the old dark times of "Popery, slavery, and wooden shoes." The fun of it is that, with our nailed-down carpets, and our sweepings that are worse than no sweepings at all, we flatter ourselves that we are the cleanest people in Europe; just as our Yorkshire pitmen, who get a dip once a year at Scarborough if they don't miss the train, are currently believed to be cleaner than dirty-faced Italians, who perhaps take a bath twice every week of their lives. We are clean in many things—clean relatively, as compared, for instance, with the Norwegians of Sætersdale, who, dressing in leather, and sleeping always in their clothes, change their dress and have a good wash once a-year, on Christmas Eve. We are clean, too, absolutely in many of our arrangements, domestic and social; there is no need for us to run ourselves down. But still, if we consider what an amount of "living dust," which might be got rid of, and which does vast harm, is always going about among us, we shall confess that Miss Nightingale was not a bit too severe when she denounced "sweeping" and some of our other household devices, and that Dr. Tyndal is not too much of an alarmist when he tells us that this dust is one of the most fertile sources of disease, and that where it does not actually make us ill, it constantly induces that "low type of vitality" which is the great evil of the day.

## CABINET PHOTOGRAPHS.

## XII.—THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND LORD WESTBURY

THOUGH it has fallen to the lot of the Duke of Richmond to be chosen unanimously as the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords, his political biography has yet to be written. The Duke's personal modesty and the force of circumstances have combined to prevent his taking so active a part in political life as might otherwise have been the case; and to the outside world he is comparatively an unknown and untried man. Nevertheless, no one who knows much of the inner life of politics can doubt that the Conservative peers chose wisely when they recently called upon the Duke of Richmond to take the leadership vacated by Lord Cairns. It is quite true that the Duke does not possess and does not pretend to possess the consummate statesmanship which distinguishes Lord Salisbury and Lord Derby, and it is equally true that he is not, like Lord Cairns, blessed with that faculty of thinking upon one's legs, which is so great an advantage to a party leader. Nevertheless, he has many admirable qualities which tend to fit him for the post which he has now assumed, and without venturing upon invidious comparisons with other distinguished men who sit beside him upon the front opposition bench in the House of Lords, we cannot hesitate to acknowledge that he was the best man available to his party for the leadership. There are many able men seated near him, but upon the whole there are none—always making the exceptions we have already named—who have the requisite qualifications of a leader to so large an extent as the Duke of Richmond. More than once in the course of these papers we have had to point out what are the qualifications required in a party leader. Tact and temper are perhaps the most important. Clearness of statement is another hardly less so; facility of speech is equally valuable. But over and above all these there must be the power of discerning the weak point in the enemy's harness, and of so directing the arrows of the Opposition that they may strike between the joints of the armour. No doubt this last qualification is a very unamiable one; but in plain words it means simply the power to detect the vulnerable points about the foe,

and to strike sharp and strong at those points. But unamiable as this quality may seem to be, it is a very essential one; if our party leaders did not possess it they would soon convert a well-organised army into a rabble, or they would give to the party which was in the ascendant for the time a complete immunity from the fear of hostile criticism.

It is because the Duke of Richmond is well supplied with these varied qualifications that we venture to anticipate for him a highly successful career as leader of the Conservative peers. He is not a statesman of the first rank, but he has that which is next to the highest statesmanship, tact. He can see which course abounds with shoals and quicksands, and which affords room for fair and successful sailing. It would be flattery to say that he could of his own wit devise a policy for a great party, but give him a policy to carry out and he will show a quick appreciation at once of the strength and the weakness of that policy, and will bring it to a successful end with far greater ease than men of deeper thought would enjoy under similar circumstances. He does not profess to compete with Lord Granville in the possession of that exquisite urbanity which makes the Colonial Secretary the ideal representative of "sweetness and light" in the Cabinet, but the Duke of Richmond is nevertheless blessed with an eminently happy temper. He has not, for instance, the crochety irritableness of Lord Russell or the Celtic impetuosity of the Duke of Argyll. He can present an unruffled front to the enemy even in the heat of an angry debate, and he can prove at all times that he is not blind to the excellencies of the party to which he is opposed. It is wonderful to observe how great an influence a little exhibition of an ability to appreciate the good qualities of opponents has in soothing the asperities of debate. There are men in the House of Commons at this moment whose popularity is remarkable, and who enjoy a reputation for statesmanlike ability which it is certain cannot be based upon any actual achievements. When the character of these men is enquired into, the only manner in which it is possible to account for the position they occupy is by ascribing it to their fairness towards those to whom they are opposed. The Duke of Richmond, therefore, having frequently shown that even when differing most widely from those who sit on the opposite side of the House, he can yet recognize and appreciate their good qualities, possesses one of the most valuable of the qualifications which the party leader ought to have. Clearness of statement again is not the least important qualification of a party leader, and here those who have heard the brief and business-like speeches of the Duke of Richmond cannot question that he possesses this qualification to a large extent. There have been



cases quite recently of statesmen who, though admirably adapted in all other respects to lead a party, have nevertheless failed utterly in the attempt to do so, simply because they had not that command of words which is necessary to make a statement in such a manner that it may be understood by those to whom it is addressed. The shambling, slovenly manner in which some eminent statesmen, whose ability no one could doubt, are in the habit of conveying their thoughts to the House, has proved an effectual bar to advancement in their political career, and has led the outside world to form a very inadequate opinion of their real powers. There are in fact, in politics as at the bar, politicians of the chamber as well as politicians of the senate—men who, though they could devise a great measure of policy, or give invaluable advice to their party, are totally incapable of expressing their thoughts in public with clearness and precision. These men may be, and indeed often are, admirable administrators; some of them have controlled the affairs of the Colonies, or our Indian empire, with marked ability and success, and others have been known to limited circles of the initiated as the wisest and most honoured counsellors of a ministry or a party. But though they may exercise vast influence in this manner, none of them can hope to become successful leaders. Under the Parliamentary system, the tongue is almost as essential as the brain; and where complete command over the former is not possessed, a superabundant supply of the latter cannot make up for the deficiency. The Duke of Richmond, however, is a clear, concise, and effective speaker. With no pretensions to the reputation of an orator, he can say what he wants to say in language which everybody will understand, and he has not unfrequently made speeches which have been both valuable in themselves, and powerful influences upon the course of a great debate. His readiness in public speaking is another of his qualifications for the post he has now assumed. We know that there are men in both Houses of Parliament who, whilst possessed of all the other qualities required by a party leader, and enjoying extensive fame as orators, are yet unable to place themselves at the head of any considerable following, because of their inability to take part in a debate without having duly prepared themselves for doing so. Even Mr. Bright, unquestionably the greatest Parliamentary orator of the age, is comparatively tame and feeble when he speaks without preparation—those thrilling perorations of his, which have more power to move the heart of the House of Commons than almost any other influence which can be brought to bear upon it, are without exception carefully composed in the orator's study, and committed to memory. Mr. Horsman is a yet more noticeable instance of this failure in the

power of effective extempore speaking. His polished essays, though they are amongst the most remarkable specimens of Parliamentary eloquence which we possess, are all carefully written out beforehand; they are literary rather than oratorical exercises. Macaulay, we know, laboured under the same deficiency, and everybody has heard the story of the well-thumbed manuscript, scored and underscored, in all the emphatic passages, which he sent up to the Reporters' Gallery in response to an application for the "notes" of his speech. The present Lord Derby is another eminent man of vast ability as a statesman, who is nevertheless anything but a ready speaker. Perhaps it is more his habitual caution than any lack of fluency that leads him to take this course, but we speak on authority when we say that he too is in the habit of committing all his more important speeches to paper before he delivers them. Of course those who labour under this defect cannot make thoroughly efficient Parliamentary leaders. One of the most important, it might almost be said *the* most important task which such a man has to discharge is that of replying on a great debate. No one who has seen the marvellous ability displayed by Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone in performing this task can doubt its importance. Either of these great statesmen will rise at one o'clock in the morning and reply, not superficially, but with genuine power and effect, to a speech the last echoes of which are still ringing in the ears of the House. We do not pretend of course that the Duke of Richmond is equal in this respect to either of the leaders in the House of Commons, but he is nevertheless a ready speaker—he does not need to prepare his shots with laborious care in his study before he fires them, and that is, after all, the main thing. All that is wanted of him as leader is that he should be able not only to express his thoughts clearly, but to do so without any longer preparation, any more complete arrangement of his ideas, than that which he can have in the heat of a debate, or whilst the opponent to whom he is to reply is yet speaking.

Of the Duke's politics we need not say much. He is a consistent member of the Conservative party; but he is equally consistent in his endeavours to bring Conservatism at all times into conformity with the spirit of the age. He would not be likely to adhere to a form which had no longer any meaning or vitality: nor is he one who will advocate any policy merely because it is the policy of which a majority of his party approves. Indeed on this point he gave clear proof of his independence last session, when he severed for a time his connection with the Conservative leaders, because he found himself unable to act with them upon the question of the Irish Church. Independence in forming opinions, and

courage in expressing them, are not to be denied to the man who could do this under such circumstances as those which prevailed last year.

The Duke occupied a seat in the House of Commons for nearly twenty years, thus gaining an admirable political training; he has been President of the Poor Law Board and the Board of Trade, in which capacities he acquitted himself with marked success, and he is now in his fifty-second year—the very prime of political life.

It has been the fortune of Lord Westbury to experience every extreme of public opinion. He has been one of the most popular men in England, and he has been one of the most unpopular; he has been exalted to a position of dignity and power in connection with his profession such as few have occupied before or since, and he has found himself thrust from office in disgrace, and followed into his retirement by the satire and abuse of mankind. There are few more remarkable political careers than his in the whole domain of English history. It is not, as we know, an unexampled thing for an Englishman of the middle class, who has adopted the law as a profession, to rise to the woolsack, and there is nothing, therefore, to marvel at in the fact that the doctor's son became Lord Chancellor when Lord Westbury was raised to the peerage. But there are Chancellors and Chancellors; and it is not often that England has seen a Lord Chancellor whose personal place in the House of Lords has been so prominent as that occupied by Lord Westbury. He has been not merely a great lawyer—and there is perhaps no man of his generation who can compete with his fame in that respect—but he has been also a great statesman, and the share he has taken both in the active work of legislation, and in debate, has been such as to entitle him to a place in the foremost rank of English politicians.

What is it that the spectator sees when he looks at Lord Westbury? The series of cruelly clever caricatures with which an Italian artist now provides the English public, contains no more successful portrait than that of the nobleman who is described by his own self-assumed title of "An Eminent Christian," but who is better known to the world as Lord Westbury. A stout gentleman, somewhat below the middle height, with snowy hair fringing, not covering, his head, and a fat, pink-hued face—gives the superficial observer the idea of the personification of amiable benevolence. Such an observer would fail altogether to detect the evidences of great mental power which are to be found in Lord Westbury's head and face, but he would also fail to detect evidences of certain other qualities the possession of which he is not so much to be envied. It takes a long and close observation





LORD WESTBURY.



of the face to detect the strange sly twinkle of the small eye, and to understand the real meaning of the simper which seems always to be playing about the corners of the mouth. When these things are fully observed and understood, however, people are as a rule inclined to draw a distinction between Lord Westbury the man and Lord Westbury the lawyer, and to place the latter upon a height to which they have no idea of elevating the former. His is indeed a remarkable face. We should be sorry to express in these pages our opinion as to all that is to be seen in it. It is enough to say that it is not a prepossessing face; that the velvety softness which appears at first sight to cover it is soon seen to be something else very different from that which it seems, and that the smooth suavity, the bland smile, are readily capable of being exchanged for other characteristics of a very dissimilar kind.

We do not propose to trace Lord Westbury's career since he entered upon public life. He distinguished himself very early at his university, taking a double first-class at an unusually early age, and one of the traditions connected with his history refers to the fact that when a very young man, soon after he had been called to the Bar, he won great distinction in a suit which his college had undertaken at his express instigation, and in which his opinion (opposed to that of men of much longer standing in his profession) turned out in the end to be correct. His rise at the Bar was upon the whole a rapid one, and he soon became known in the Chancery courts as a profound lawyer, and an acute and not particularly scrupulous critic. Then he found his way into parliament, and became one of the select knot of competitors who, having advanced thus far in the race, seem to see their goal—the woolsack—already in view. Here he speedily acquired a reputation for a peculiar kind of caustic wit which was enjoyed intensely by the House. Ere long the Solicitor-Generalship fell into his hands, and this was in due time followed by the higher post of Attorney-General, both of which were of course capped by the final honour of the woolsack, bestowed upon him by Lord Palmerston. There is nothing exceptional in such a career as this. It is not in the success which for many years attended all Lord Westbury's efforts that his highest fame consists. It is to be found rather in his fall from office, and in the peculiar qualities of mind which have made his name a household word both in Parliament and at the Bar.

As to Lord Westbury's fall, we have no desire to discuss at any length the circumstances attending it. We fancy that most people would now be of opinion that the noble and learned lord was rather hardly dealt with, and that after all he was punished more for the sins of other persons than of his own. It was his



misfortune to be the father of a son whose character is so notorious that it is no breach of good faith, or of ordinary delicacy, to refer to it. That this son took advantage of his father's vast influence as Lord Chancellor will, we believe, not be questioned; but we imagine that most people will now admit that Lord Westbury himself had clean hands in the transaction which led to his withdrawal from office. Lord Palmerston, according to his wont, stood gallantly by his colleague when the latter was assailed with a rancour which posterity will hardly be able to understand; but even Lord Palmerston's great influence was insufficient to maintain Lord Westbury on the woolsack, and all the world knows how, in a speech remarkable for its quiet dignity and its scrupulous good taste, he stepped aside from the honours he had fairly won by unremitting labour, and retired from official into private life.

Posterity, we say, will hardly be able to understand the bitterness with which Lord Westbury was assailed with reference to the matter which cost him his possession of the woolsack. The present generation, however, labours under no such difficulty. It knows that it was not on account of his indiscretion in the administration of a single paltry piece of patronage that Lord Westbury was driven from office, but because of his general character as a public man. Possessed of splendid talents, rich in a boundless store of legal knowledge and experience, he might have had a smooth voyage through life unchequered by the storms which rage round less gifted men. But, unfortunately Lord Westbury's talent never shone to such advantage as when it was employed in stinging with cruel sarcasms those with whom it was his lot to be brought in contact. What he was in his earlier days, as a rising man at the Bar, we do not profess to know; but it is at least certain that when he had risen, and become a celebrity both in the House of Commons and in his own profession, he seemed to abandon himself to a sort of mania for annoying and wounding other persons. It is difficult to believe that he ever intended to be as unamiable as he was; but it is nevertheless certain that he succeeded in hurting the feelings of almost every man who came in contact with him. Possessed of remarkable powers of wit and sarcasm, he never seemed happy unless those powers were being employed at the expense of some unfortunate being, whose only offence was the fact that he did not possess Lord Westbury's ability. The counsel who were opposed to him in the cases in which he was engaged, the members who ventured to criticize his speeches or measures in the House of Commons, the very judges before whom he used to plead, all were made to smart under the lash of his bitter stinging tongue.

When he was raised to the woolsack the matter became still

worse. Lord Westbury had evidently gone to the House of Lords with the idea that he was a man of genius, henceforth doomed to the companionship of those who in intellect and in knowledge of the world were mere babes, and under the influence of this idea he proceeded to treat his colleagues in the Upper House with a cavalier insolence to which they had never before been accustomed, and which they were by no means slow to resent. Many stories, which if they be not true are at least very good, are told of Lord Westbury; sayings with respect to his duties on the woolsack. One only need be repeated, as affording in a concise and epigrammatic form a fair representation of the noble lord's estimate of the rest of the world and of himself. "When I was at the Bar," he is reported to have said, "I spent my time in talking to noodles. Since I became Lord Chancellor I have spent my time in listening to them." A man who holds such an opinion as that which is thus tersely expressed, must at all times be a somewhat disagreeable colleague and still more disagreeable opponent; but when he has in addition the intellectual ability and the powers of sarcasm which distinguish Lord Westbury, he becomes really terrible in his power of wounding and annoying. Therefore, before very long, the Lord Chancellor became one of the most unpopular of public men in the inner circles of politics. With the outside world he retained the popularity which he had earned by his legal reputation and his many efforts to promote beneficial legislation with regard to the practice of our courts of law. But it was impossible that men who were daily being brought in contact with him, and who had daily to wince under his bitter jibes and sneers, should continue to regard him with simple admiration for his intellectual powers. They might continue to admire those powers, but their admiration was more than counterbalanced by their personal dislike.

It was during this tenure of the Lord Chancellorship that one or two of those mortal combats occurred which attracted so much attention at the time, and revived public interest in the House of which he had become a member. There was, for instance, his famous battle with Lord Chelmsford, on the question of compensation to the officers of the Insolvent Debtors' Court, which was celebrated in *Punch*, in one of Mr. Tenniel's best cartoons. Who that witnessed that combat will forget it? On Lord Chelmsford's side was all the right, on Lord Westbury's all the might. The ex-Chancellor attacked the Chancellor with an amount of determination that the amiable Frederick Thesiger does not often display in personal squabble, and he succeeded in inflicting some very ugly blows upon his opponent. But when that learned lord's turn came the fortune of battle changed.

With mellifluous accents, and bland simper, Lord Westbury succeeded not only in stinging his assailant almost beyond endurance, but in enlisting on his own behalf the sympathies of his audience.

Still more celebrated is his encounter with the Bishop of Oxford, upon one of the many questions raised by the action of Convocation, with respect to *Essays and Reviews*. It was upon this occasion that Lord Westbury cruelly dragged into the debate certain epithets which have been familiarly, not to say contemptuously, applied to the Bishop of Oxford, and amidst roars of laughter spoke of the "saponaceous" character of a certain document upon which he was commenting. The Bishop winced, and took an early opportunity of avenging himself upon the Chancellor, but after all oil cannot compete with vinegar, and the latter as usual had the best of the conflict. Nevertheless, even the most powerful of men may make too many enemies, and it has been the lot of Lord Westbury to experience the truth of this statement by his own bitter experience. Confident in the strength of his splendid intellect, and in the fear which his matchless powers of sarcasm awakened in all who had to come in contact with him, the Lord Chancellor pursued his way with a recklessness that was almost sublime. It mattered not to him at whom he struck, or whose was the body upon which he trampled in his onward path; though all hands might be raised against him, he still believed that his own powers were sufficient to enable him to win in the unequal contest. And for a time it was so. The men who were writhing under his cruel witticisms and his polished epigrams found themselves helpless in their struggle with him, and were compelled to bide their time with such patience as they could command. But at last their turn came. It is not for us to rake up all the scandals which surrounded the closing years of Lord Westbury's Chancellorship. With his private life—be it good, bad, or indifferent—we have nothing to do; and we are willing to leave his public failings in obscurity.

It is enough to say that the ever-growing irritation which he succeeded in producing amongst almost all classes in Parliament at length found vent in a cry for his removal from the woolsack upon a charge connected with one of the many appointments which he had to make as Lord Chancellor. The cry kept up with much persistency, and swelled by all who had ever come within reach of that stinging tongue, was successful; and one afternoon the noble lord announced to the House of Peers, in a speech of much dignity and even pathos, that he voluntarily gave up his honours and retired into private life. For a time, Lord Westbury, like most men under similar circumstances, played the part of a misanthrope.



He retired to Italy, and, in a secluded and beautiful estate of which he had become the owner, led a life which had very little in common with the ordinary life of an English lawyer or politician. He had shaken the dust of England off his feet, and announced to his friends that he never more intended to trouble himself with the public affairs of his native country. But the attractions of political life proved too strong for him. Seldom, indeed, is it that the man who has once mixed in the conflict of parties, who has once tasted the stern joy of that contest which is never at an end, and which for ages has been handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, in this self-governed land, can leave the battle-field and remain at rest in his own home, whilst the smoke and noise of the conflict still reach him. Political life is like dram-drinking: it grows upon a man, and when once it has been fairly indulged, it can never, in the vast majority of cases, be abandoned. So Lord Westbury was not very long in finding that the pleasures of life in an Italian villa, though delightful for a time, begin to pall upon the man who has been accustomed to a more active state of existence, and before very long he had found his way back to England, and reappeared in that House of Lords which it was understood had beheld him for the last time. Well, England could have better spared a better man; and few people were sorry when they heard that the debates of the Upper House were once more to be enlivened by that peculiar and inimitable wit of which Lord Westbury is so consummate a master. He has not taken any very active share in party debate since he came back; but he has delivered not a few effective speeches, notable amongst them being that in which he criticised the Irish Church Bill of last session, and with the mild resignation of an eminent Christian man, likened himself to "one crying in the wilderness," a simile which was received with a burst of laughter such as is not often heard in that decorous assembly. Yet, even when he does not speak, he is a power in the House. Seated upon the front bench below the gangway by the side of the other great statesmen who have retired from active business, but who are ready at any moment to throw themselves into the fray, he is a man at once to be courted and feared, and he thus continues to exercise an influence upon the counsels of the House of Lords, of which the outside world is altogether unconscious.

There are few men who have a more peculiar manner in speaking than Lord Westbury. Indeed, there is something irresistibly amusing in the spectacle he presents when he is delivering one of those wonderful speeches in which the most admirable moral sentiments are flavoured with jests that are remarkable

for their pungency rather than their delicacy, and in which the dulness of an ordinary disquisition is enlivened by personalities by no means remarkable for their scrupulous fairness. The fat pink face, the twinkling eyes, the soft, velvety voice, and the cruel smile that hovers about the mouth all add to the effect of the speech itself, whilst the cheers and laughter with which each successive point is received show that, when he likes, Lord Westbury is still able to make what Mr. Tozer would call "an 'it'" in the House of Lords.

At the bar and on the bench the noble and learned lord was equally remarkable for the peculiarities of his manner. When he was a practising barrister he used to irritate unspeakably the judges or law lords before whom he had to plead by the cool and almost insolent manner in which he treated them. One of the many stories told concerning this period of his life—and a whole volume might be compiled of Westburyana—relates to his appearance on one occasion as counsel before the House of Lords. When he was called upon to address their lordships, instead of proceeding to do so at once, he apparently engaged himself in private devotions, assuming the attitude befitting an eminent Christian when engaged in prayer. Their lordships looked at Sir Richard in some astonishment, but waited patiently for a minute or two. At last one of them ventured to hint that they were prepared to listen to the Attorney-General. The suggestion fell unnoticed upon the great lawyer's ear. "Come, Mr. Attorney," at last said the then Lord Chancellor, "we have been waiting for you for several minutes." Slowly the good man unclasped his hands, opened his eyes, and turned towards the House with a merry twinkle: "Your lordships, I fear, are somewhat impatient," were the only words of apology or explanation which he vouchsafed to offer for conduct that was, to say the least, unusual on the part of an Attorney-General.

One of the most amusing episodes of his life was his famous address to the young men of Wolverhampton upon Christian love. Of that address it is perhaps only necessary to say that those who knew Lord Westbury best were most astounded at the fact of his appearing as the champion and advocate of the Christian religion; whilst none could forbear to smile when they saw that the man whose bitter tongue had made enemies for him in every rank of life, ascribed his success in his political and professional career to the fact that from early youth he had cultivated the graces of Christian love and charity. Nevertheless, it is only fair to say that "the Gospel according to Bethell," as it was christened by the *Saturday Review*, was in theory a gospel which might well be commended to the approval of mankind.

This sketch of Lord Westbury would be altogether one-sided and incomplete if it took no notice of the really great and noble work which he has accomplished as a legal reformer. For more than a quarter of a century he has been the foremost advocate of that fusion of law and equity which it seems at last likely will soon be realised. It is more than twenty years since he announced, at a public dinner, the fact that his object was to "swallow up law and equity;" and the various schemes of legal reform with which he has since been connected, show that if he have been unable to accomplish that feat at one mouthful, he has been doing his best to accomplish it piecemeal. His share in the carrying of the Divorce Court Bill through the House of Commons, where he had to fight its battle almost single-handed against the leading members of the High Church party, procured for him from Lord Palmerston the offer of the judgeship of that Court as soon as it was established. He declined the offer, believing that better things were in store for him. This is only one of the many attempts he has made to improve our legal system, and it cannot be doubted that if he had retained possession of the woolsack he would have accomplished a really good work in this direction. As it is, his future fame must rest far more upon his legal than upon his political reputation; though he will long be remembered in Parliament as one of the wittiest and most sarcastic of debaters.



## REVIEW.

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THE ALBUM OF FASHION. By Mrs. C. E. Brown, 17, Westbourne Grove, London, W. Feb., 1870.

UPON the threshold of our inquiry into the merits of this really handsome publication—where beauteous damsels clad in purple and fine linen smile upon us—we feel somewhat in the same position as that unfortunate gentleman in the *Lysistrata*, who, having a mind to explore the mysteries of the ladies' worship of their peculiar deity, found his way, in woman's dress, into the temple; and being exposed, was very properly held up to the scorn and the reprobation of the offended worshippers. We feel that we are standing before the threshold of that all-potent goddess's temple—Fashion. We are about to be initiated into the awful mysteries of *toilette* and *coiffure*, and it behoves us to deal tenderly and warily with the great question of dress, lest we draw upon our heads the mingled wrath and contempt of the fair readers of *St. James'*. Says Gay, in the *Guardian*, No. 149, *apropos* of this subject, "The most fruitful in genius is the French nation. We owe most of our gaudy fashions now in vogue to some adept beau amongst them." It seems as though French fashion is to be worshipped as blindly as heathen men worship their Fetish. Let but France give the word, and a woman's hair is dragged off her forehead till the skin is stretched as tight as a drum over the temples, à *l'Imperatrice*. And anon, at the same command, the hair is cut short over the eyebrows, hiding every morsel of the forehead, and reminding one of Vandyke's portraits. At the mystic fiat from over the Channel, a lady's dress is inflated till so great is the circumference, that a man may take a constitutional round his lady-love, and yet be unable to approach her; and at the same fiat the crinoline disappears, and the dress clings like a wet bathing gown to the figure. At one time you shall see a lady's hat, surmounted by a whole pheasant, or a couple of mocking birds. At another the head-dress will consist simply of a wisp of ribbon and a strawberry. It is like Proteus, this "deformed thief" Fashion. You cannot confine it into any one

form or shape. Each month presents a different toilette; each month the fair devotee is obliged to twist her hair into different patterns, and for the matter of that, obliged to build up on her head a solid superstructure of golden or ebon tresses, which are her own—only pecuniarily. And each month the unhappy victim who holds the purse shudders as he beholds the milliner's bill, and looks back with eager longing to the primeval days, and envies the domestic life of the Sandwich Islander, with whom dress is, to say the least of it, a superfluity.

There is one thing that strikes us in looking over this handsome Journal of Fashion, and it is this, that *outré* and *bizarre* styles of dress seem to have lost favour with the Parisian authorities, and are, therefore, we may presume, going out of wear. We look in vain for the hideous "war paint and feathers,"—no persuasion will make us call it dress,—which it has pleased the "Girl of the Period" to attire herself in. Two special varieties there are, of which a glance at the streets of a large town will convince our readers; and of these the first is silly, and the other is nothing short of wicked. The first of these is what is called the "Grecian bend," which our authority styles *la pouff*, but which old-fashioned people in the plain-spoken times styled a "bustle" (see Figs. 10, 12, Plate viii). Now, what there can be either in nature or art, which justifies a young lady in placing a hump upon her back, passes our comprehension. With this monstrosity in wear, it is impossible to keep the figure straight, and we can only compare the gait of many of our girls to that posture which an inexperienced skater assumes just as he is about to fall forward upon his face. The "Grecian bend," forsooth! Does the deluded maiden of our day really believe that the laughing-eyed, dark-tressed girl, of the days of Aristophanes and Socrates, hobbled along to market, or to the theatre, bent double like an old woman? Straight and lithe as willow were these maidens of Greece, and we might take a lesson and not lose much from their *peplum* and *chiton*,—garments which did not cramp or distort the graceful figure, but left each limb to sink or swell, as nature pleased.

And the other variety which we will notice, is both foolish and criminal. Flunkeyism, we all know, is inherent in the British mind, and whatever example Royalty sets, *must* be followed. The Princess of Wales, owing to her severe rheumatic affection, halted somewhat painfully in her gait. The ingenious mind of the "Girl of the Period" seizes upon this, and forthwith by the aid of one high-heeled boot, and one boot with no heel at all, the "Royal Limp" is imitated. And lest the overbearing, masculine heart should exult here, and boast of manifest superiority, let us just

inform our readers, that on a certain occasion, when a Royal Prince, visiting a dockyard, chanced to "cave" in the top of his hat, the next morning each individual clerk in the establishment had followed the Royal example, and appeared with dented beavers! And just in the same way the sailors' pea-coat became fashionable, because it sheltered the gorgeous D'Orsay from the rain.

Another monstrosity, which on the highest Parisian authority we are glad to find is dying out, is the chignon. The first time that this style of head-dress made its appearance, it was just tolerable, but when the English ladies thought fit to build a curious Tower of Babel on their heads, the nuisance became intolerable.

This fashion, too, in its most exaggerated state, was merely the echo of the past century; so true is it that fashion, like history, repeats itself, and runs in regular cycles. Readers of the comedy of William the Third's reign, up to that of George the Second, and those who are familiar with the paintings of William Hogarth, will remember the *commode*, or laced head-dress of that time, which was not more foolish, and hardly more extravagant than the chignon. This *coiffure* was composed of rows of lace stuck upright over the forehead, shooting upwards one over the other in a succession of plaits, while long streaming lappets hung over the shoulders from behind.

In D'Urfey's "Wit and Mirth," a fashionable lady thus speaks of her attire: "My *high commode*, my damask gown, my laced shoes of Spanish leather, a silver bodkin in my head, and a dainty plume of feathers." At the present day we are informed this style of *coiffure* is a favourite one among the Esquimaux, and the wife of a missionary was surprised on landing in England, after an absence of many years, during which the fashion of tiring the head had altered, to find the Esquimaux chignon quite the correct thing in the old country. An amusing story was current some little time ago, when the wearing of false hair was the rage, to the effect that a young sailor, pressed for time, on parting from his lady-love, had begged a lock of her hair. There was no time to sever the coveted gift, so the fair one removed the chignon *bodily*, saying in the fulness of her love, "Take it all, dear, take it all."

On consulting the mystic pages of the oracle, we find that the chignon is reduced within bounds, and that a very much prettier *coiffure*—the Greek, or classical plait—is introduced. Nothing to our mind is more becoming than the hair arranged in symmetrical plaits close to the head, especially if that head be a small and a well-formed one. There are two or three styles of dressing the hair in Plate IX. which ladies will do well to study, though Fig. 2,



in which the hair is brought over the forehead in "two horns," is hideous in the extreme. A glance at Plate II. reminds us of a difficulty which all men have to contend with, and that is the inordinate length of the "trains" in ball-dresses. These trains are not only an useless waste of material, but make a man's life a burden to him.

No one who has threaded his way through the mazes of a quadrille, or the Lancers, will ever forget the misery which these sweeping garments entail. Instead of attending to his steps, the unhappy dancer has to tread warily on tip-toe through the yards of costly material, only too happy if he can lead his partner back to her seat with her dress untorn. A clumsy man comes to grief always, and the "Oh dear!" with which the lady greets the destruction of her train speaks volumes of expletive. In the valse, these trains have a pleasant knack of wreathing themselves serpent-wise, round a man's legs, and we once saw a hapless officer completely swathed in yards of tulle, till his spurs rent it into shreds. Surely ball-dresses might be worn short, or looped up, after the fashion of walking dresses, so would much saving be effected of money to paterfamilias, of temper to his daughter. And akin to the question of trains, is one that more nearly affects the tone of morality, and that is the lowness of the dress. It is useless to deny that we have reached a pitch in "undress" which would have made even Lady Wortley Montagu open her eyes, and she was by no means delicate.

It was very wittily remarked the other day in an article describing a scene in a lodging-house, that the women were almost as nude as fashionable ladies dressed for the evening. A pitch has been reached which most unquestionably affects the morals of the community. We do not take upon ourselves to treat of this question in the open way that the "Saturday Review" has, but we *do* think that common decency requires a change. Let Lais and Phryne and their lost sisterhood do as they will, let the *corps du ballet* manage with as little clothing as the Lord Chamberlain will permit, but let us keep our daughters and sisters modest in attire, as pure in mind. If it is necessary to have anything of the kind, though with the French judge we do not see the necessity, by all means let us have as little of it as possible, and if we *must* have the Girl of the Period, let us have her dressed. Hideous as was the Elizabethan stomacher, it was decent—for the *corsage* of the present day, which we have seen composed of a rose and some slips of ribbon, as much cannot be said. We think ourselves very far advanced in civilization, beyond the Anglo-Saxon and the middle-age people, yet Godiva would have fainted had her daughters come down to dinner as *décolletées* as English ladies do now.

We are pleased to find, though, from actual experience, and from the Album of Fashion, that a change for the better is taking place. Another point on which we note a manifest improvement is the size of the bonnets and hats. Hitherto the great art in head-dress seems to have been to keep the head as unprotected as possible. Fashion had decreed that a butterfly and a wisp of lace must constitute a lady's head-gear, and fashion was obeyed. Far be it from us to uphold the ancient "coal-scuttle" bonnet; but there is a golden mean in dress as well as in philosophy. A bonnet was surely intended to cover the head, and not to leave it all exposed. And *apropos* of straw-bonnets, it is amusing to read the satirical comment of the last century. One Reynolds, in his comedy of "Speculation," thus speaks of them:

"Of threatened famine who shall now complain,  
When every female forehead teems with grain,  
When men of active lives  
To fill their granaries need but thresh their wives?"

On the whole, we think that the fashion of ladies' dress is improving, and we can heartily recommend Mrs. Brown's Album to our readers' attention. As a work of art it merits considerable praise, the colours being laid on with great taste, and the figures (which is a rare thing) absolutely having some expression on their countenances. One more word. It were to be wished that some such production as this were in the hands of our middle and poorer classes, with the materials adapted to their income. There is a glut of cookery books for the million, why should there not be a popular Magazine of Fashion, which would teach the wives and daughters of operatives and tradesmen the art of dressing well and inexpensively, without the necessity of aping the rich, or of ruining those unhappy beings who have to pay the milliner's bill?

## MAY IN THE COUNTRY.

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WHETHER our lovely May ever did deserve the sonnets which have been written to her eyebrows by so many gallant British poets, it is totally impossible to determine. She still softens occasionally, and shows us by a passing gleam what it is possible she once was—the month of mirth and love, when you could dance out of doors, and flirt by moonlight without danger of consumption or rheumatism. But she has of late years become on the whole an undeniable old maid, shrewish, biting, and malicious. What the Elizabethan minstrels would say to us, could they rise from the dead, for this impeachment of their favourite toast, we shudder to think of. But we shudder still more at the harsh east wind who is now the usual lover of Aurora whenever she goes out a Maying, who turns the blue sky into a mockery, gives to the skin of one's face the appearance of a very coarse eggshell, and makes it totally impossible to keep any part of one's person clean for half-an-hour together. It may be that our ancestors, who lived more in the open air, and who though not more healthy were perhaps more hardy than ourselves, felt perfectly indifferent to the wind, as long as they could get the sun, and were able to abandon themselves to the poetry of the season without being sensible of its rawness; or it may be really that some climatic change has passed over the English seasons, and that each begins a month later than it used to do when May was synonymous with all that is young, beautiful, and blooming, and held her rural court upon every village green in the kingdom. But whatever be the cause, there can be no doubt that it would be unpardonable affectation in any poet of the present time to write about the month of May as it was once the fashion to write. This month has still charms peculiar to itself, but they are charms which come home rather to the naturalist and the sportsman than to the shepherds and the milkmaids whom Queen Elizabeth is reported to have envied.

Not but what there is an element of poetry in the month of May, independently of wind and frost. In April we never see more than the faint dawn of vegetation, and that is only visible



to an attentive observer. A blue sky and a brown landscape are what ordinarily greet the eye upon an April day; and but for a mildness in the air, not greater however than may often be experienced in February, we might imagine ourselves to be in mid-winter. Not so, however, with the month that follows. Let the weather do its worst, it cannot keep back the buds and the blossoms any longer. And signs of the coming summer are everywhere soliciting our senses. May then is the month of hope. April is too backward to inspire it; but in May, at last, we do begin to feel that the pulses of nature are beating with renewed life, and that the "bridal of the earth and sky" has really commenced. The parti-coloured hedgerow bursts into complete green. The hawthorn, with lingering hand, like a lady fearful of the weather, puts on her pretty frill of white and pink. The crab follows suit with an unwashed edition of the same. The soft and dewy lilac, like some fair Quakeress, bent on making the most of her costume, puts on her demure attire. The willow dons her sea-green plumage and seems for the moment to be cheerful. The stately aristocratic elm unbends like a lord dancing among his vassals, and bedecks himself for the occasion in the most beautiful of all verdure. The cold, unimpressionable ash suddenly begins to smile, and his black knots develope into an attempt at geniality. The oak holds out, apparently seeming to think that having once sheltered a Stuart on the 29th of May, he will never shelter anything meaner. But on the whole "summer has it," so to speak, throughout the present month.

The still golden days when it is a luxury to fling oneself on the long cool grass, which is as dry as last year's hay, and when you shun the least appearance of a fire as if it were the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar; when the corn is beginning to show its ears; when the brooks are fragrant with meadow-sweet; and the uplands with the dog-rose and honeysuckle—these you cannot have in May. She is a moist and chilly month, which allows us not to put off all the armour of winter, under penalty of being surprised by influenza. But in May we know that these are at hand; we already grasp them in imagination; we have been storm-tost for weary months, but now we know the haven is at hand; we have wandered long in the wilderness, but we have reached the top of our mountain at last. Thence lie spread out before us the three rich and happy months of June, July, and August, a glorious waving plain of green and gold, terminating in a glimpse of tawny stubbles, and sun-burnt copses, suggesting somehow to a warm imagination a vision of setters and pointers, partridges, cold pie, Moselle cup, and tobacco.

The partridge is as yet in the shell that is to furnish out that entertainment—we trust the Moselle is in the bottle—and that reminds us of one of the most interesting of country pursuits which is in perfection in the month of May, and that is, birds'-nesting. We fancy somehow or other that birds'-nesting is not quite so much in vogue among the youth of these realms as it was in former times; but it has a charm still for the present writer, and it certainly brings one in contact with some of the prettiest objects in nature. The earliest of the small birds is we should say the hedge sparrow, who has sometimes begun to lay before the end of March, though of course the rooks have been busy over their nests for weeks before that. However early Easter might be, we always reckoned on a string of hedge sparrows' eggs in the Easter holidays. This little bird makes one of the prettiest nests of all the feathered kind, chooses the snuggest situation, and lays some of the prettiest eggs; it is formed almost entirely of moss, hay or dried grass, mixed with a little wool, and is found generally low down in a hedge, especially where there are any old stumps. The eggs are a bright blue, and look up at you like a girl's eyes, through the green moss, the dark thorn stems, and the bright young leaves which are just beginning to shoot. The blackbird and the thrush are not long after the hedge sparrow if at all; they build a good deal in the hedges too, but seem to prefer gardens and shrubberies, fir trees, laurels, and all kinds of evergreens being very favourite places with them. The thrush's nest is formed of dried grass, fibres, and clay, of which last material she makes its inner lining, therein differing from the blackbird, who covers the inside with something softer. The eggs of the thrush are blue with small black spots at the thick end: those of the blackbird are a curious mottled mixture of pale green and brown. For some time the young marauder will look in vain for any nest but these three, unless he has the luck to put a wood pigeon off her nest at the top of a high fir tree, or on one of the outspread limbs of a huge elm; or he may perchance detect by the fluttering rags of wool which always hang about it, the nest of the mistletoe thrush high up in the fork of some slender-growing tree which it is no easy task to climb; but the eggs are always highly prized by birdsnesters, partly because of the difficulty in getting them, partly from the rarity of the colour, being white with large red blotches all over them.

But with the month of May the finches, the titmice, and the warblers begin to lay, and in the Whitsuntide holidays the school-boy is embarrassed with his riches. First there is the chaffinch's nest, which, shaped like a coffee-cup, he discovers in the old

apple tree, cunningly cased with lichens, and so neatly fixed into a fork that none but the initiated could detect it. Then there is the green linnet's, high up in the thick tangled hawthorns, a miracle of grass and wool, and moss and feathers, not to be torn down or rifled without considerable laceration of the hands and face, but containing five or six such beautiful little eggs of the purest white freckled with the most delicate brown! Then there is the brown linnet, or linnet proper, who builds in the high gorse in the fox cover, whose nest is much simpler, and whose eggs are plainer than the green one's, but are held in much esteem nevertheless. Finally, at quite the end of the month, we have the nests of the white-throat, balanced on the slender sprays which stretch across the ditch bottoms, and are so abundant that you may find half-a-dozen in a single hedge-row. The reed sparrow now builds under the banks of brooks, and a still greater treasure than all is the carefully concealed nest among the overhanging grass and weeds of some dry shallow ditch of the yellow-hammer, with its curiously scrawled eggs, which have caused the bird in some parts of England to be called the writing lark.

All these and more come flocking back to our memory as we think of thirty years ago, and the fields, the meadows, and the glebes to which we have long since bade adieu. But we must not forget the flycatchers, the prettiest and liveliest of all garden birds, of whom one pair used to build in an old pear tree nailed against the parsonage wall, while another pair occupied for several successive years a hole about nine feet from the ground in the trunk of an acacia tree which grew just before the dining-room window. They lay eggs of a mottled reddish brown colour, much prized by juvenile collectors. But we were never allowed to rob the visitors in question.

There is, however, another kind of birds'-nesting to be pursued this month of a much more profitable description, and that is the search after plover's eggs. These are the eggs of the green plover or peewit which are considered so great a delicacy on the breakfast table. These birds lay their eggs upon the ground, and generally, though not always, on rough fallows, where they scoop out a saucer-shaped hole just wide enough to hold five or six of those eggs which all Londoners have seen exposed for sale in shop windows. It is easy to tell if there are any nests about by the demeanour of the birds, who keep wheeling and screaming over the fields *near* to which their treasure lies. But it is difficult to tell the exact spot, for though we have never seen them actually try to lead the intruder away from the proximity of their nests by pretending to be wounded, they certainly have art enough to



make the greatest noise and exhibit the most excitement where their eggs are *not*. The only thing to be done is to walk patiently up and down the field, ridge by ridge, and you are sure to be rewarded at last. Only make a note of this: Don't take the eggs when you find more than three in a nest, since the chances are they have been "sot on," as the little bird-scarer looking at you over the hedge would express himself, and you will have committed the crime of robbery in vain. Rooks' eggs are often stolen and sold for plovers', the colour being very much alike; and indeed, the only outward difference between them being this, that the narrow end of the plover's egg looks as if it had received a gentle pinch while it was soft between the thumb and finger, while the rook's never does.

It is a shame to take their eggs, for rook shooting is capital fun, and a sport peculiar to this month. On a fine afternoon about the 18th or 20th, in some ancient, well-timbered park, where the ground swells into knolls crowned with clumps of "immemorial elms," and sinks into hollows where you will find a cool spring to mix with your cognac; where, round the ancient church and the old manorial hall, the rooks still hover over the tree-tops, and refuse to be driven away, though their brethren fall before them like the leaves, a few hours may be pleasantly spent, even by men accustomed to the Highlands. Of course with a shot gun the rook cannot be called a difficult bird to hit, but he always keeps a long way off, and is a very good mark at which to test the shooting power of your gun. Swells shoot them with rifles, and that is of course a much greater triumph of skill. In spite of the distress of the agricultural interest, we have never seen boys sent up the trees as Mr. Pickwick saw them, nor should we think a child's life would be worth many minutes' purchase among the topmost boughs of an elm tree into which half-a-dozen farmers were pouring the contents of their rusty old single barrels. Occasionally these gentlemen shoot each other, but nobody minds that. Rook pie, we may add, if made by an expert artist, is no mere factitious dainty. The rook has a flavour of his own. But we have observed with some pain that pies of all kinds are no longer what they were.

Among the nobler sports of the month trout fishing is of course the foremost. Stag hunting still lingers where the red deer runs wild, for this is the time of year when the barren hinds are best killed. Where otters still exist, May is the month for that most picturesque of all field sports, and we need not say that the salmon is in all his glory. But these are not the kind of May diversions which it was the intention of this article to

describe. We leave these to sporting writers of a higher grade and more ambitious character. We have confined ourselves to those characteristics of the period which are within the range of every one's experience, and within the reach of every one's enjoyment. And, besides, these last-mentioned amusements are not peculiar to the month of May. We should have liked to throw in a touch of those amusements which were considered peculiar to it in the days of the *Spectator*. But neither the month nor the sex are so warm as they were then—in the days of the blessed Queen Anne. And even if they were, spades are no longer called spades, and other monosyllables have been wrapped in corresponding euphemisms.

## BAD MADE WORSE.

## A COMMON-PLACE STORY.

## PART III.

In the course of a few hours I entered upon a new phase of life altogether.

Fitzjames Harvey *in propria persona* was the exact opposite of the Fitzjames Harvey I had pictured to myself over-night.

He was a pale, slightly built young man of about five-and-twenty, with a thin, worn, anxious-looking face, a weak mouth and chin, and the long, white fingers of the delicate and hypersensitive. At first he spoke in a dreamy, abstracted way, as if only half awake, but in a minute or two he brightened up wonderfully. His manner was cordial, gentlemanly, and without a trace of stiffness.

"I am glad to see you," he said. "Kobbold was here yesterday, and I had a long talk with him. He thinks that if you care to share my rooms with me we shall get on together capitally. I am sick of the life I have been leading for the last year or two. It has been utterly without aim or object. I want to get into more regular habits, to be of some little use in the world. I have no settled pursuits; I have nobody and nothing to think about. I want ballast, and I think you can give me some. Kobbold told me how you are situated, and I fancy both of us will be the better for a change. You have led a gloomy, monotonous life of late, and a rather more cheerful existence will improve your health and spirits. As for myself, when I see you grinding away at something you are fond of, I may be induced to follow your good example. The fact of the matter is, I live too much alone. I want a companion, a real companion, I mean, not a fellow who will take all the unpleasant part of my business concerns off my hands, and humbug me, and agree to everything I say, and sneer at me behind my back, but a chap whom I can trust, and talk to, and who will take some interest in my proceedings. I have as much money as I want, and lots of acquaintances who are very willing to sponge upon me, but not a single real



friend. My father and mother are both dead, and though my late guardian is a very worthy man, I have a haunting suspicion that he is a bit of a rogue. Besides, he has marriageable daughters, both of them literary.

"By the bye," added my new acquaintance, after a pause, "I told my landlady I expected a visitor. There is a room all ready for you whenever you like to come. You say you think the arrangements I have made and the terms I mention will suit you, and that being the case, perhaps the sooner you settle down here the better. What do you say to this evening? Susan shall get a cab, and you can drive over to Lambeth and be back in the course of the afternoon; and we will dine together. Will six o'clock suit you? And afterwards we will go to the theatre."

I interposed no objection. If my employer spoke authoritatively, he spoke pleasantly at the same time, and the salary he had just offered me was so far beyond what I should have dared to ask for myself, that I should have been a dog not to have fallen in with his proposition at once.

Fitzjames Harvey declared that in worldly matters he was a perfect child. Certainly he behaved towards me with almost extravagant generosity, and I was amazed even then to find a man so totally free from suspicion of any kind. At the very outset he treated me as if I were an old friend. He consulted me in everything, and never assumed the slightest air of superiority. He was a thorough gossip, and in the course of a few days I knew so much of his past life, that I could fancy there was little more to tell.

My employer led a very lazy existence, and I did the same. We rose late and went to bed late. We did little during the day but eat, drink, walk about, and amuse ourselves. We were always making up our minds to reform our habits, but we stopped just short of practice. We reproached ourselves now and then for our sins of omission, simply, I think, as a matter of form. We always felt better after having done so, and did not alter our proceedings in the least.

We went to a theatre or a concert every night. My friend was restless, and a lover of art in all its branches. We spent hours in picture-galleries, in walking about streets and examining shop windows, and in strolling round the park and gardens, admiring pretty faces. My friend professed to be fond of literature, but he seldom read anything but novels; sometimes he took up a newspaper, but would throw it aside a moment afterwards, as the only things he cared for were the dramatic and musical critiques. He had no interest in politics. There were days when he could not settle down to anything, and, in spite of his amiability, be-

came quite a nuisance. He would complain that he had no appetite for breakfast; he would pour out a cup of tea, butter a slice of toast, and send both away almost untasted; he would read a page or two of a novel, then begin talking, then go to the piano and strike a few random chords, then light his pipe, then put it aside discontentedly on the mantelpiece, then walk up and down the room with his hands in his pockets, whistling an opera air, then fling himself almost sullenly on to the sofa, then take up the newspaper, then throw it away again, then ask me abruptly whether I were inclined to go down to the Crystal Palace, then negative his own proposition, remembering that he would have to dress, and that it would be the middle of the afternoon before we could catch a train, then sit down at his desk and begin scribbling on stray scraps of note-paper and old envelopes, then get up and begin whistling again, then suggest a walk in the park, then—but I will not pursue my friend's restless mood any further.

At first I was inclined to be virtuous, and felt dissatisfied with my life in Granton Street. It seemed such an utter wasting of time. But by degrees my scruples vanished; I began to fancy that to do nothing but amuse myself and to draw a handsome salary into the bargain was rather a pleasant way of spending existence.

"I will tell you what it is," said Harvey, one day, "you look as well again as you did when you first came here. You are in better spirits, and eat and drink with an appetite; you don't stoop as you used to, and you have learnt how to laugh. Keep on as you are doing now, and at the end of a twelvemonth you will be a different fellow altogether to what you were a year ago."

My resolutions are none of the strongest. I am self-indulgent, prone to float with the stream; I am obstinate now and then, but I have no steady purpose. Of course I had made up my mind to be an example to my employer. But he began to talk in that half shallow, half profound, and wholly amusing way of his, and I partly assented to his arguments at the time, and assented to them wholly before I had been with him many weeks. I consoled myself with the reflection that hitherto I had heard only one side of the case, now I was hearing the other. I had always prided myself on being free from prejudice. I had perhaps been too hasty in condemning other people. I could see now that a thoroughly idle life—though it might not be particularly useful—was yet far from unpleasant. But perhaps it had its uses after all. Certainly I felt much stronger and in better spirits than I used to be. If an idle life did me so much good it would be sheer Puritanism to stick to my original intentions; besides, as I reflected, I am earning money, I am gaining health and

strength; no, I am not really wasting my time, though I may seem to be doing so.

But conscience whispered, "you are more idle even than you need be;" and I replied impatiently, "I have not had much enjoyment in life yet, I am entitled to enjoy myself now that I can."

Oh, it was downright folly being fastidious. Fitzjames Harvey wanted me as a companion. He wanted somebody to go about with him, and be pleasant and amusing, not a book-worm, whatever he might say. It would be the worst policy in the world turning saint. I should run the risk of offending him, and perhaps lose my situation. Stand to one side O my scruples; I am poor and I need money: I am making it now, and without any trouble. I can afford to be ultra-conscientious only when I am out of the reach of want.

Fitzjames Harvey behaved towards me—excuse the vulgarity of the phrase, reader, for the sake of its truth—"like a prince." He allowed me a salary such as I am sure no other companion ever received within the memory of man. Whenever I went out with him he insisted on paying my expenses. Thus I was not only able to earn money but to lay money by as well. "It isn't as if you came out for your own amusement," he said, "I daresay you would sooner be at home reading or writing, or making chemical experiments; but it is a misery to me going about by myself, so I take advantage of my position, and force you to come along with me. I am a terribly selfish fellow, as you will find out by and bye. Oh, no, it is quite a mistake of yours, fancying that you are under any obligation to me: it is I who am under an obligation to you. I ask you to do what you don't want to, and you do it; I enjoy my evening as well again when there is somebody to spend it with me. I don't care to eat my dinner in solitary grandeur. I like to dawdle over it and gossip. So you see you are doing me a favour by coming out with me, and of course I don't expect you to muddle your salary away in helping to pay for my own follies. Don't fancy you are ruining me; I can afford to be extravagant. You are a very moderate chap. Your dining with me makes very little difference, and I enjoy my meals as much again when I have some one to talk to."

I yielded to my friend's arguments, for I knew that I should only offend him by being obstinate. And yet I was not quite satisfied with my position. Whatever he might say I felt that I was incurring a heavy obligation. However, for the time being I said nothing; and I had this excuse, that my life hitherto had been doleful to a degree, and that my existence in London, however worthless it might be in a moral sense, was one both of pleasure and profit.



Unfortunately it was not to last.

A cloud began to gather. I don't know how it was, but somehow or another a coldness grew up between my employer and myself. So far as my experience goes it is not an easy matter for any two men to live together long without quarreling. Fitzjames Harvey was of an irritable disposition; my own temper was none of the best. I began to see his faults; he began to see mine. We disagreed on certain questions of taste, and fell to argument. I had a foolish idea that if I humoured my friend I should be guilty of flattering his prejudices. He tried to convince me. I thought it my duty to show my independence, and answered rather brusquely. He changed colour and became suddenly silent. I felt that I had been guilty of a rudeness, but I fancied that it would be mean to apologize. Besides, after all what apology was required? I had only said what I thought, and though my words were strong they were not offensive. Disagreement number one led in due time to disagreement number two. Each of us tried to put a check upon himself; each of us, sooner or later, lost patience. Fitzjames Harvey, in spite of our tiffs, continued to shew me as much kindness as ever, but I began to resent it. He insisted on my dining with him every day; he insisted on my going to the theatre with him, and insisted on defraying my expenses. I felt humiliated: I protested openly against this burden of obligation which was forced upon me in spite of myself. My employer answered coldly and shortly. I began almost to dislike him. His face wore an expression at times as if he had had enough of me. I felt rather a contempt for his understanding, and when he paraded his theories my temper began to rise. Sometimes when he wanted to talk I wanted to read. He harangued me on some pet topic and I answered absently. He continued speaking for a little while, and then his voice trembled slightly and he suddenly stopped.

But our last quarrel—the grand quarrel of all—took place in this wise. I cannot drink wine with impunity. A glass or two of champagne makes me silly. I begin to talk nonsense and know that I talk nonsense. This annoys me, and I try to explain myself: naturally I talk greater nonsense than ever. By and bye a contradictory mood comes over me; I am full of concentrated bitterness. I am exasperated by a sense of my own wrongs, of my own littleness. I care for no man's opinion: as the common people say, I am in the humour "to quarrel with a stone." I wish, curiously enough, to be thought savage and unfeeling. I take a vindictive pleasure in wounding the susceptibilities of my best friends. At the same time I feel a kind of remorse when I reflect on the ill return I am making for their kindness and

patience. But I like to see shocked faces. I am oracular and vinegary; Solomon one half, Timon the other. I glare at my foes, and I daresay altogether I am very amusing. But somehow I have a vague idea that I am making a fool of myself. This goads me to still further extravagancies. I want to prove that after all I am consistent,—that my ideas are not so grotesque as they seem,—that however eccentric my notions may be it is a great mistake to fancy that I am at all the worse for liquor. Next morning, when I come to my senses, I have usually a good deal to be ashamed of.

Wait; there is a moral to my story. People of an excitable temperament and weak constitution, more especially if they are troubled with a sluggish liver, and are naturally abstemious, ought to be very careful what they drink. One glass leads to a second, as all the world knows, and two glasses with one man go as far as twenty with another. Quite a copy-book bit of morality. True; but it may be worth your while, O my friend, to lay it to heart for all that.

Fitzjames Harvey liked to enjoy himself; he liked to enjoy himself in company. If he drank—and he did not drink much—he liked to see me drink too. I had been used to nothing stronger than table-beer. At the third glass of Chambertin—especially if it came after something else—my eyes felt hot and my tongue worked clumsily. But as my friend did not seem to notice anything I concluded that there could not be much amiss after all. He began to talk; I answered him slowly, oracularly, and with a cunning smile. Let anyone, I thought to myself, try a passage of wit with me, and I rather fancy he will meet his match. When you imagine yourself cunning you are half-way towards being taken in.

To pass from the skirmish to the battle.

I shall not, however, descend to revolting particulars. The fray began, as did most of our dinner-table squabbles, with splenetic oratory. It concluded with a bitter laugh just a trifle insulting. After this the bill was called for and paid. The waiter bowed; we stalked solemnly out of the restaurant. We were not intoxicated, for we could walk upright; we had simply mixed our liquors—and very bad liquors—and it had come to this. O stomach, stomach!—We cannot trifle with our digestion.

“If we cannot agree, we are better apart.”

“I agree with you *there*.”

Thus it was settled to be settled again and more formally next morning.

I was sorry and rather alarmed, but if the wine had gone out

of my head, obstinacy and conceit soon mounted up to take its place.

My success had made me arrogant. I still knew little or nothing of the world. I fancied that having earned money in one place I could earn it in another. I had got an idea into my head that I was a fellow of enterprize, that there was plenty of employment for such men as myself if we would only take the trouble to look for it. Besides, I had some ready money in my pocket, and when that is the case it is wonderful what confidence you have in your own ability. It may seem an extravagant assertion, but I believe good living had intoxicated me. I had never before been in such spirits as I enjoyed at about the time of which I speak. I had always been conceited, and I was naturally of a sanguine disposition, but I had been kept within bounds by being repeatedly and systematically crushed. If a man usually unlucky has a run of success it gets to his head at once. I was fully convinced that fortune was beginning to smile upon me. I imagined that my silly day-dreams were taking shape and becoming matters of fact, and since what had once seemed impossible had happened after all, I was in the humour to believe that the wildest of my delusions were in a fair way of fulfilment.

Thus I left Granton Street and my kind generous friend without misgiving, and with a valiant determination to prove to him before long that I could do very well without him.

On the morning of my departure the following letter arrived at my lodgings :

“ 21, Bulstrode Street, Craddock Road,  
“ Manchester,  
“ May —, 18—.

“ MY DEAR NEPHEW,—

“ If you can get a week's holiday we shall be glad to see you here to-morrow evening—Tuesday. Your mother is well, and looks forward to your visit. Do not disappoint her.

“ Very sincerely yours,  
“ RANDOLPH TROWER.”

Good. The journey would divert my thoughts and give me breathing time. I must be on the look-out now for fresh employment. Perhaps my uncle would be inclined to help me. I had more confidence than I possessed formerly in my powers of persuasion. I would tell him exactly how I was situated, and talk matters over with him in a calm, business-like way. I was sure he would be glad to hear that I wanted to begin life



in earnest,—that I had turned my back on the flesh-pots of Egypt in a spirit of true British independence,—that I had flung aside the bread of charity, preferring to labour with my own hand, to fight my own fight, to struggle on by degrees to success in some honourable calling—say a branch of trade. Yes, that was what I would say, it would flatter my uncle's prejudices. Thus I rambled on, laying absurd plans for the future, feeling a contempt for the past, and despising the good friend on whom I was turning my back:

Randolph Trower was a tall, broad-chested man, with a cheery flesh-complexioned face and a tuft of snow-white hair on each side of a head as round and shiny as the proverbial billiard ball. He dressed entirely in black. His clothes were well-made, his linen was spotless; he wore an old-fashioned choker, and, like the famous Mr. Dombey, exhaled an atmosphere of scented soap. He received me with much apparent cordiality, shook me by the hand, gave a few directions to a servant about the luggage, and conducted me into the presence of my mother.

I pass over our affectionate greetings. The very term, though appropriate enough, savours of cant. I was pained to see that my mother looked in feeble health, spoke in a timid half-whisper, and glanced anxiously towards the door now and then, as if she expected somebody before whom she would have to stop speaking altogether.

The somebody appeared at last in the person of my uncle. He began talking to us in a suave, patronizing tone that was rather offensive. He evidently regarded us as pauper relatives, but felt that it was a Christian duty to be as agreeable as possible. He smiled amiably as he conversed, and no doubt looked upon me as a mere boy. I daresay he complimented himself on his affability. He, a man of capital, was making himself pleasant to a couple of beggars. Why, he really treated my mother and myself *almost* as he treated his equals. What condescension! There was just the merest dash of authority in his voice. Once, when I contradicted him, he looked surprised, took a pinch of snuff, and laughed quietly as if something had tickled his fancy. I could not help wondering how he treated his workpeople. I heard afterwards that he was not in their good graces, but he always managed to get his own way. He was never in the wrong. He acted from a strict sense of duty, and everyone knew that he did so. He was so calm, so cool, and so logical that people of a Jacobinical turn of mind who came to worry him about their grievances always felt that it was they themselves who were the culprits. Their voices faltered and their eyes fell under his steady, goodhumoured, but rather contemptuous gaze. He reasoned with them quite in

a pleasant, sociable way, and they twirled their hats round and round in their hands, and slunk defeated from his presence. Of course when they were safe out in the street they saw things as they really were, and knew what they ought to have done, and ground their teeth to think that they had been so easily outwitted; but of what use are surly words and threatening gestures when walls and doors interpose between them and the immaculate being for whose edification they are intended? Nobody had ever heard of Mr. Trower losing his temper; nobody had ever *convicted* him of anything mean or unfair. He had the advantage of all the world. Society might have its suspicions, but suspicions are suspicions and nothing more. Mr. Trower was always ready to give you a fair hearing. Mr. Trower kept his ear wide open for complaints and petitions of all sorts. When you had finished speaking he would wait a moment, take a pinch of snuff, ask if you had anything more to say, pause for a reply, smile, make a fair promise that as you afterwards found out meant little or nothing, smile for the second time, and bow or nod you out of the room with all the urbanity imaginable. Nobody could say that Mr. Trower had hurried him, contradicted him, or not allowed him to say all that he had got to say. One of this worthy man's strong points was that however much you might be prejudiced against him, he always managed to make you feel that he himself was the injured party. You began speaking; he sat down as if he were ready to devote the whole afternoon to your service, looked at you attentively through his spectacles, nodded his head occasionally as much as to say, "Just so, I know exactly what you are going to tell me;" and if he spoke at all did so in such a temperate, judicial, highly superior way that you could not but feel that it was impossible for so kindly and genial a man to be in the wrong, that your passion must have run away with you, that out of the depth of his forbearance he was speaking to you with a degree of confidence that he extended to few persons, and that it would be simply unfair to push him any further. Nobody, so far as it could be ascertained, had ever benefited himself by securing an interview with Mr. Trower; but it had happened to a good many people that having conversed guardedly and cunningly, as they thought, with the manufacturer, they left his presence with a vague impression that somehow or another they must have let drop an admission most damaging to their own interests.

"Well, Robert," said my uncle, as we sat in the dining-room after dessert, "I am glad you have been able to provide for yourself. I like to see independence in a young man. Your mother is a most excellent person, but by no means energetic. I am glad to be of use to her, but it is a bad thing for a family when its

members depend for support upon other people. Your mother is my sister and she has a claim upon me. If you had not helped yourself I could have done very little for you. Now that you have a good situation I hope you will keep it. A rolling stone gathers no moss. No doubt you will rise by degrees from what you have now to something better."

Trite advice, but admirable of its kind. Not very dissimilar to that of my favourite authors. Strangely enough, though it disconcerted me, I had expected something more genial. As yet I had a mere speaking acquaintance with my uncle, but my confidence in my own powers of persuasion had dwindled away amazingly. I had expected that we should meet as equals, instead of which he plainly looked upon me as a very young man indeed. I saw that it would be folly trying to delude him with any assumed airs of practical ability and worldly wisdom. Yet it would be cowardly, I thought, to give up my point altogether. Enlist him in my favour by some means or other I must and would. Like all nervous persons I was in too great a hurry for a result. I began to talk at once, without premeditation, and at a bad time, too, for though I had not drunk much wine, I had taken enough to confuse me.

My uncle seemed a hospitable man. He had encouraged me to fill my glass, and I thought it would be churlish and impolitic to refuse. No doubt though he had an ulterior purpose in what he did. For some reason that I have not yet fathomed he wanted to loosen my tongue. I threw away the only opportunity I had of prepossessing him in my favour. He would have respected firmness. All men do; even the men you thwart. I had much better have held to my first resolution, which was to drink no wine at all. Unless you are very clever indeed it is wiser to be conscientious than cunning.

I began to speak of my position and prospects. I said that I was very comfortably off no doubt. I made money—my uncle smiled—and I enjoyed myself. But still I had my scruples. I was afraid I was wasting my time. It hardly seemed to me judicious depending so much on the variable temper and patronage of a single individual. Not that I had anything to say against my employer—he was a man of a thousand. But still—I did not know—once upon a time I had been ambitious. Of course that sort of thing was all folly. I must take a practical view of affairs. My uncle looked at me and immediately looked away again, but I felt uncomfortable. What I meant was—"well now, you yourself, sir," I continued, turning in my chair, "my mother has told me that you worked your way up without assistance from anybody. I cannot help thinking that young men in these days



ought to look simply to themselves if they mean to succeed. If we want anything we must fight for it; we must have a distinct aim and a settled purpose——”

“By-the-bye,” said my uncle suddenly, “suppose we go upstairs. Your mother is in the drawing-room, and I recollect that I have some letters to write.”

“Look here, Robert,” he said the next morning after breakfast, “if you have thrown up your situation you have acted very foolishly. Don’t believe all that nonsense the story-books tell you about self-made men. If I had not been helped, and pretty liberally too, I should never have got on at all. If you are lucky enough to get a good chance stick to it. Take my advice, try and make terms with your employer. If he is the good-natured fellow you say he is you will have no great difficulty in bringing him round. I can’t keep you on here after the end of the week, for I have some visitors coming. Meanwhile look about you, that is your wisest plan. If you don’t mind a hard truth I doubt whether you are the sort of stuff out of which self-made men are got. If you like a clerkship I think I can find you one. But it is hard work and only twenty pounds a year. How much do you say it was you had at your last place? A hundred and twenty? Good heavens! You will never have such luck again, Robert, take my word for it. However, I have my business to attend to. Think matters over, and perhaps by the evening you will be able to let me know what you intend doing.”

And with this Uncle Randolph left the room.

I bit my lip savagely. Curse the fellow, with his good-humoured face and insincere smile! Curse him, with his sneering, cold-blooded advice and open contempt! A twenty pound clerkship indeed! Trust to your relations for helping you at a pinch! Well, he should find out one of these days that I could do even without *his* valuable assistance.

By-and-bye I went upstairs to the drawing-room. It was a comfortless, showily-furnished apartment, gleaming with highly polished rosewood and hung with villainous daubs in bright yellow frames—an apartment stuffy as to its atmosphere, resplendent as to its grate, an elaborate contrivance of metal and tiles, in which a good homely fire would have savoured of blasphemy.

My mother sat in a stiff-backed chair, working. I turned to her on the impulse of the moment and said, “Can you tell me anything about Kitty?”

She put down her work, and a pained, sorrowful look came over her face.

“I have heard nothing about her for months,” she answered. “I think it very cruel of her not to have written to me. She

knows that I love her dearly, and whatever your poor father may have done I never even said a word to offend her. I was in hopes you would be able to tell me something about her. I thought you might have heard of her up in London. I thought you might have tried to find out what had become of her."

I shook my head. I had been too much bound up in my own trumpery concerns to have a thought to spare even for my sister.

"Some time ago," my mother continued, "I put an advertisement in the papers. I received an answer in a day or two. It was only five words. 'Mother I am well—Kitty.' That was in December, now it is May. Oh, on those cold winter nights I used to be so unhappy. I could not tell what had become of my poor girl, and when I thought of her headstrong disposition—you know, Bob, she always would have her own way—and remembered the things your father used to say about her husband, I really felt quite miserable. Oh, I wish she would drop me a line, if no more, to relieve my anxiety. When you go back to town, Bob, do try to find out something about her. Randolph is very good, and tells me he is sure nothing can be wrong or she would have come to us for help. But I am the poor dear child's mother, and I dare say he would not take things so coolly if it were his own daughter who was missing."

My mother went on to congratulate me on my success. I answered never a word. She tried to praise her brother for his generosity, but I could see that she was unhappy. I attempted to comfort her, and then stopped short disgusted at my own folly and selfishness. Had I only shown a little self-restraint I might shortly have been in a position to help her. As it was I could do nothing. I had not the courage to tell her that I had thrown up my situation in a pet.

I began to think. Yes, I would resolve upon something and that right soon. I would set all my wits to work and have a decisive answer ready for my uncle when he returned in the evening.

I pressed my mother's hand and went upstairs.

My room in Bulstrode Street was at the back of the house. From the window you saw the backs of other and taller houses. If on a fine afternoon you opened the aforesaid window, put your head out and looked upwards, you saw a narrow strip of bright blue sky. You drew your head in, sate down and dreamt—say of carriages rolling along full of handsome, well-dressed women, gay shops, fashionable promenades, dusty streets, cool shady gardens, and military bands playing operatic selections at flower-shows. Or, if of a poetical turn of mind, your thoughts wandered away to fields dotted all over with wild-flowers, as on a clear frosty night the heavens are with stars; to rivers drifting languidly sea-

wards, as if the hot summer months had scorched all energy even out of the waters ; or to the heart of some cool, dimly lighted copse full of quaint, small sounds—the rustling of leaves as a squirrel darts by, the tap-tap of the woodpecker, the falling of a nut or a berry, the gliding of a raindrop from the dark hollow of some curled-up leaf on to a broader leaf below, the crackling of twigs when a bird moves, and the creaking of the boughs when at sundown darkness draws on apace, and the wind begins to rise.

Yes, my room was a suggestive one. It was so high up in the house that it was called the “crow’s nest.” It was very cool and very silent. It became dark long before any of the other rooms. The view from the window was so mean and so narrow in its range that if you wanted to enjoy the beauty of the day you were driven back upon your imagination. You saw brick walls and chimney pots, sunshine and shadow. If you were not satisfied with that much, you could dream to your heart’s content ; no one would interrupt you. Sometimes when you looked out on those grim brick walls, with a golden haze hanging between them and your own dusty window-panes, you imagined the day brighter than it really was. People out of doors might see a cloud in the distance, but that narrow strip of sky over your head would be as smiling as ever till the storm was upon you. A very deceitful room that of mine. You sat in it and mused, and formed a very erroneous opinion indeed of the world out of doors.

When I had finished talking to my mother I went up to the “Crow’s-nest,” sat down at the table in front of the window, opened my desk, took out a sheet of notepaper and an envelope and began to think.

Should I write an apology to Fitz-James Harvey ? My uncle had recommended me to do so. But what should I gain by such a course ? A sneering reply, extra humiliation. No, I would do without Fitz-James Harvey if possible.

Would Kobbold help me ? I was ashamed to ask him.

Suppose I were to try the theatrical business again. I laughed bitterly. No, I had had enough of theatricals.

What remained ? Kitty. Yes, what could have become of her ? She was my only hope. She had money and probably influence, and would help me if she could. It would be humiliating having to apply to her, but I had no choice. Yet if I were prepared for humiliation why not write to Harvey ? why not appeal to Kobbold ? They could but refuse, and both of them were so good. No, I must decide for the worse, as I always did. I found out later that though Harvey would not have received me back into his service—why should I blink the word ?—he would readily



have helped me in other ways. But though I can own to myself that I have been in the wrong, I cannot do so to other people. A little frankness in the present would have saved me much suffering in the future. But I anticipate.

I made up my mind to go back to London and find my sister. I would set off at once. Not that I had resolved on any definite course of conduct, but there is always a certain amount of satisfaction in getting back to your old basis of operations.

I had managed, as I have said already, to put by some money. I had nearly eighty pounds in my possession. I should be able to live on that comfortably for a couple of years or even longer. By that time I hoped something would have turned up. Yes, I would cut short my visit to Manchester. All the time that I was spending there was so much time wasted.

"Well, Robert," said my uncle, in the evening, "have you made up your mind?"

"Yes," I answered, "I am much obliged to you for your offer of a clerkship, but I think on the whole I had better go back to London. I have formed a plan which I should like to carry out at once. I am afraid you will think me rude—"

"By no means, Robert," broke in my uncle, "a young man has no right to idle his time away. As you have slipped out of one berth you ought to slip into another as soon as possible. Remember that you have a duty to your mother, as well as to yourself. Here is a five pound note for you; do not refuse it, you cannot afford to do so. If you really take pains to get on I will help you at a pinch. But I warn you not to rely on my help too much. I can do very little for you. You can remain here till the end of the week, or you can start as soon as you please. Your going or staying will make no difference to me."

"I shall be glad if you will do me one favour," I added, "I do not want my mother to know that I have given up my situation."

"I never meddle in other persons' affairs," said my uncle, "I shall not say anything of my own accord, and if your mother questions me I shall tell her as little as I please."

We exchanged a formal "good-bye," and parted—my uncle to his business, I on my fool's flight to London.

\* \* \* \* \*

I pass over eighteen months of vain regrets, self-reproaches, purposeless wanderings hither and thither, systematic but fruitless enquiries.

I am still out of employment. Nearly all my money has

dwindled away. I have applied for a situation again and again and have either received no answer at all or have been refused.

I am in despair as I look forward. I am weak and out of health. I would gladly turn my hand to anything, but I am so feeble that there are few things which I could undertake with any chance of success.

I am sitting on a bench in the middle of Hyde Park. A chill misty evening is closing in. I am moodily wondering what will become of me in another week or two when all my money has gone. I have not found living in London so cheap as I imagined it would be. Perhaps in a small way I have been extravagant. I remember a certain dinner which I could not really afford at a certain restaurant once familiar to me. The head waiter bowed when he saw me, and supposed respectfully that I had been in the country. He brought me ice before my soup, and rosewater after my cheese. He attended to all my wants himself. For three quarters of an hour or so I was back in my old careless, discontented, happy life. But it was an inexcusable luxury, that dinner of three courses, with the extra shilling to the waiter. I remember, too, certain visits to the half-crown gallery at the Opera. I had better have saved my money, but it was so dull in my lodgings and I was so fond of music. Ah well, I had had my pleasure and must pay for it. The only excuse I can find for my folly is that I made sure something would have turned up for me long before this.

I feel a hand on my arm. I hear a voice that thrills my very soul.

"Oh Robert, it is I—your sister Kitty! I am nearly broken-hearted. I am starving!"

I leap from my seat. She sinks upon it and covers her face with her hands—a face pale as death, hands cold as the grave.

Poor, poor Kitty! In utter rags—a complete beggar!

## CLERICAL CELEBRITIES.

A SERIES OF ECCLESIASTICAL PORTRAITS.

## VIII.—THE REV. H. P. LIDDON, AND THE REV. MERCEAS GUTHRIE.

A STRANGE sight might have been witnessed in Piccadilly on any Sunday afternoon in Lent of the present year. Everybody who knows London knows what the normal Sunday afternoon appearance of that thoroughfare is. Lively at all other times during the week, Piccadilly on Sunday is unquestionably dull, the closed shops, the empty pavement, and the absence of the carriages which are usually to be encountered there, all tending to give it a very different aspect to that which it usually wears. But during the recent Lent, Piccadilly, even at the dullest hour of Sunday afternoon, was full of life and bustle, for the Rev. Henry Parry Liddon was delivering the Lent Lectures at St. James's, Piccadilly, and was attracting to that well-known church congregations which in numbers would have done no discredit to those which gather from time to time at Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and which were made additionally remarkable by the fact that they were to a great extent composed of those members of the upper ranks of society with whom as a rule we do not associate abounding zeal in the cause of religion.

"Who will say that the English are not a church-going people?" The question is asked this afternoon in the court-yard of St. James's Church by a gentleman, who, it must be confessed, looks as if he would be considerably more at home in the grand tier at Covent Garden than in the place where he now stands. He has some reason, too, for asking the question. For he is one of a dense crowd assembled in the yard patiently waiting for the opening of the church doors under the hot April sun. We have seen crowds as large, possibly even larger, assembled round the door of a theatre on a first night; but this is not a theatre; it is a church; and unhappily we need not call attention to the fact that the English people as a rule show a great deal more anxiety to obtain admission to the theatre than to the church. Moreover, the character of the crowd is altogether different to that which one meets with round the portals of Covent Garden or the Hay-



market ; and it is, at the same time, quite distinct from the ordinary church or chapel-going crowd to be met with on all ordinary occasions when some celebrity of the clerical world is announced to preach. The ladies who are patiently wedged into this dense crowd are for the most part the ladies you may see in the park in the afternoon, and if you have any acquaintance with our aristocracy, titled and untitled, you can hardly fail to recognize not a few of the persons who surround you. If you have just been reading Mr. Oliphant's "Piccadilly," you are pretty sure to look round amongst these fashionable feminine enthusiasts with interest, as you endeavour to discover who amongst them belong to the order of "worldly-holies," and who to that of "wholly-worldlies." As for the gentlemen, they are of all types and orders. There are grave politicians to be seen in the crowd, for there is a cabinet minister, there the son of a former prime minister, and here half-a-dozen members of the two Houses gathered together in a little knot. Then there are scores of mere loungers—specimens of those wonderful young men to be met with any day in Pall Mall and St. James's Street, who neither toil nor spin, and who yet are arrayed in raiment which Solomon himself if he were "to come again, a modern gentlemen," might envy. Here and there you see in the crowd the face of some notable personage in the literary world. Yonder is a novelist, upon the fortunes of whose favourite heroine all the world has been hanging for months past, and not far from him is a well-known journalist who seems to have come here in the course of his ordinary professional routine, just as he will go down to the House to-morrow to hear Mr. Lowe make his Budget Speech. There is even a stray actor to be seen in the throng; and all have been brought together—to listen to a sermon!

Strange are the scraps of sentences which you catch as you wait for the opening of the doors. It must be confessed that the conversation which goes on around you is not always of a kind calculated to fit you for the solemn service in which you are about to engage. There is very little attempt on the part of the crowd to assume the ordinary church-going look of the average Englishman, and there is the utmost frankness in the confession that it is the sermon and the sermon only for which anybody cares. Says one curled darling, who has hurried over breakfast at his club in order to be in time to get a good place here, "I like coming to hear him, just as I like going occasionally to consult some celebrated doctor. Does you a world of good; more than going to a common man would, you know." Let not the reader imagine that the writer is here drawing upon his imagination.

This was one of the remarks he heard as he waited outside St. James's Church on the Sunday afternoon in question.

But the doors are suddenly thrown open, and the crowd presses forward. There is not more crushing and confusion than there would be under similar circumstances at a theatre, and presently all find their way into the huge church. Very soon the crowd inside is so great that every seat is occupied, and then the aisles, the pulpit steps, and all the spots where there is standing room are taken possession of, and the church is literally packed full to overflowing. For a long half-hour we wait patiently, scanning each other's faces, picking out the celebrities who are to be seen in the congregation, watching with intense interest the departure of a young lady who is half carried, half pushed through the dense throng in a fainting condition, and ever and anon—especially if we happen to be amongst those who have to stand—turning wearily to the clock. Punctually at the hour appointed a very young curate makes his appearance and afternoon service begins. It is but common justice to the curate to say that he seems fully alive to the fact that it is not the beautiful service of the English Church which has attracted people to St. James's this afternoon, and he undoubtedly does not detain them from the intellectual treat to which they are looking forward any longer than he can help doing so. By half-past three the service is over, and we are waiting for the sermon. Suddenly there runs up the pulpit steps—for no other word will describe the rapidity of his ascent—a gentleman apparently slightly below the middle height in stature, whose face, when he shows it to the congregation, is seen to be strongly marked with those characteristics which we commonly associate with the possession of intellect and of power. The keen eyes and the firmly-compressed mouth are indeed signs which can hardly be mistaken, and which show that the man who now faces the congregation is not to be classed with ordinary preachers.

He utters a prayer, and his voice is so low and indistinct that even those near him can scarcely catch the sense of his words. For a moment strangers are startled by the fear that after all Mr. Liddon's fame has been exaggerated, and that, however great he may be as an author and a theologian, he has not the physical qualities required by a good preacher. But the next instant all such fears are dissipated, by the remarkably clear and sonorous voice in which the text is read out. Wonderful indeed is the part which the human voice plays in the world. Few who have studied the matter can doubt that it exercises far more influence upon the destinies, not of individuals only, but of nations, than any other physical quality which man possesses. Beauty, strength, bodily skill and endurance—are all in their way valuable qualities,

and each and all have not exercised a little influence upon society. But the voice stands alone. Lacking a good voice some of the men who now play, or who in times past have played, the largest parts in the eyes of the world, would have been absolutely unknown, whilst, possessing a powerful and flexible organ of speech, men who would never otherwise have been great or famous, have attained to an eminence to which they had no real claim. At this moment, for instance, there are preachers to hear whom thousands flock every Sunday, who may be said, without exaggeration, to enjoy all their popularity in virtue of their voices; whilst all who know anything of the inner life of the House of Commons, must be aware of the fact that there are men in that assemblage who would be amongst the foremost of our statesmen, if it were not for the fact that Nature has dealt hardly with them in this respect, and has deprived them of the great advantage of a clear and powerful voice.

It is well, therefore, when a man whose duty it is to address large companies of his fellow-men by word of mouth is blessed with a good voice. It is still better, however, when he is not "a voice and nothing more;" when his vocal powers are but an addition to great mental powers. That this is the case with Mr. Liddon it is almost unnecessary to remark. Indeed, this afternoon, those who have not heard the great High Church preacher before are not left long in any doubt as to his intellectual abilities. With marvellous clearness, and with striking energy, he lays before his congregation the plan of his sermon. Is it taking a liberty with that congregation to hint at the possibility that the logical skeleton of his discourse is of itself beyond the comprehension of many present? We know what ordinary sermons are. Sometimes we have the mere appeal to the hearts of an audience; the simple and yet earnest exhortation founded on the plain words of Scripture, to increase of faith and newness of life. Sometimes we hear the humdrum theological dissertation upon a given text, usually very dry, and seldom very edifying. The didactic sermon, the impassioned sermon, the "practical" sermon, the doctrinal sermon, the rhetorical sermon, the sympathetic sermon—do we not know them all, and is not each good in its way?

But it is not often that in the English pulpit we have the profound intellectual sermon. It is not often that our preacher, rising to address his congregation, pours forth a brilliant oration, rich in something more than figures of speech or texts of Scripture—a sermon every sentence of which has been composed with a close attention to literary style, and every line of which is replete with that power only to be gotten by a thorough knowledge of the most modern aspects of the great questions which are discussed.



In one word, it is not often that a preacher of the present day brings Kant and Comte, Fuerbach and Mill, Strauss and Baur, into his sermons, and discusses their theories and propositions side by side with the views of the Apostles or the Fathers.

This is what Mr. Liddon does, however. When you have ceased to think about the mere voice—so rich, so clear, so flexible—which is addressing you, and when you have been compelled to acknowledge the admirable clearness and precision of his style, you are startled to find yourself being led to a consideration, not of the doubts and fears which troubled the world centuries ago, and which have never caused more than a passing qualm to the present generation, but to a consideration of the very speculations which assail you in the literature and in the society of the day, in your library and at your club. It is too much the custom for the modern pulpit to pass by these modern doubts unheeded. Perhaps we can hardly wonder that it is so. Few preachers have the time or the opportunity, and still fewer have the inclination, to grapple the theories and speculations of the hour—theories and speculations which are ever assuming new shapes, and which require to be constantly studied by those who would keep themselves abreast of modern thought in its greatest centres. All the more reason have we to feel grateful to a man like Mr. Liddon, who has analyzed each of these rising waves of doubt as it has swept over the surface of society, and who is ready with a remedy for the effects which each has left behind it. All may not appreciate that remedy, but all must acknowledge the erudition, the culture, the mental power, and the zeal which are displayed in their application.

Indeed, as we stand in the aisle of St. James's this afternoon, spell-bound by the impassioned torrent of eloquence which is being poured forth from the preacher's lips, and which is hardly the less powerful that it smacks rather of the study than of the senate, we fall back in wonder upon the speculation of Goldsmith's villagers, and we ask ourselves how "one small head" can have acquired, in the midst of a man's multifarious practical duties, the apparently universal knowledge which distinguishes Mr. Liddon. It is easy, of course, to say in reply to such a speculation, that a full shop-window does not prove the existence of a well-filled shop. But it is impossible to deny, that into each of these sermons is crammed the ripened experiences of years of study and reading, and that in Mr. Liddon we have splendidly maintained that tradition which for centuries associated the highest culture and profoundest learning with the Church.

The minutes slip by unheeded, as the brilliant preacher continues his discourse, taxing the intellectual powers of his congrega-

tion with an unsparing hand. At times, as he enters into a subtle analysis wholly new in the modern pulpit, something like a shade of weariness steals over some faces, for not a few have hopelessly lost their depth in attempting to follow him. But at the next moment all wake up once more to the closest and most eager attention, as in words of rare felicity and impassioned force, he gives expression to some of the deepest and widest aspirations of our natures, or answers some of the most pressing questions of our souls. An hour, an hour-and-a-half, an hour-and-three-quarters, have been marked successively on the face of the old church clock since Mr. Liddon gave out his text, and still the sea of faces is turned towards him, and still every ear is open to the rich and melodious voice, and all would apparently be ready to go on listening with unabated earnestness and attention for hours more. Suddenly, however, the preacher pauses, and taking up his manuscript turns over many pages, showing that he is yet far from the end of the sermon. He hesitates a moment, then glances at the clock, and the crowded aisles where many have been standing for nearly three hours, and "skipping" nearly a third of his manuscript, rapidly brings the sermon to an effective and eloquent close. For a few moments longer the vast congregation remains together, and then it pours out into the sunshine of Piccadilly, and turns westward towards Mayfair and Belgravia.

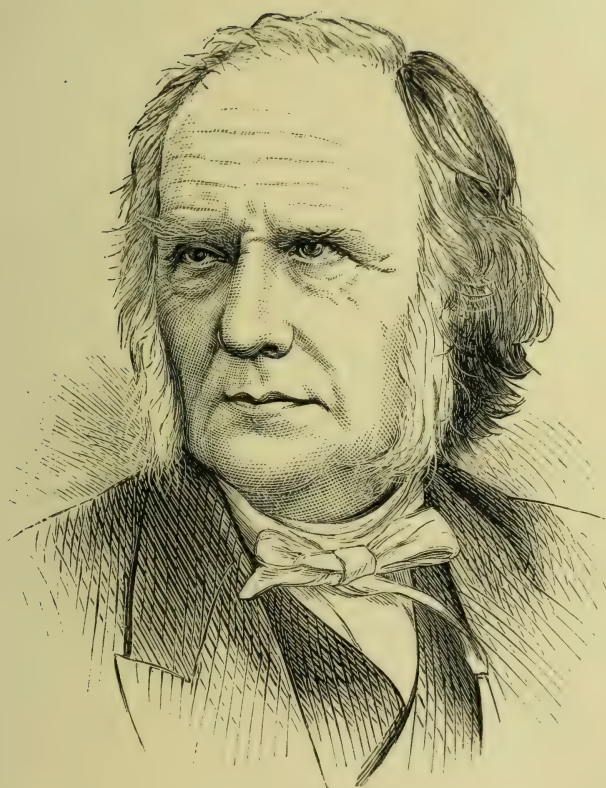
A preacher who, under any circumstances, can at the present day rivet the attention of a congregation for an hour-and-three-quarters, and can preach for that length of time without wearying any one, is, we need hardly say, a remarkable phenomenon. We have all occasionally marvelled at the ponderous discourses of the Puritans, and the Elizabethan divines, and have felt a shuddering pity for the congregation doomed to sit for hours at a stretch whilst a preacher was "expounding the Word." But time then could scarcely be said to have attained the value which it now possesses in the busy world. And yet in the heart of busy London, men and women are found ready at the present moment to undergo the penance of three hours' confinement on a hot afternoon in a stifling atmosphere, in order to have the opportunity of listening to a sermon of unexampled length. As one of Mr. Liddon's critics has well observed, such a circumstance "recalls the triumphs of the opera rather than of the pulpit." To nothing but the possession of remarkable powers and remarkable zeal and earnestness can such a phenomenon be attributed. And that Mr. Liddon does possess both this intellect and this enthusiasm is patent to any who have studied his remarkable volumes of sermons, and his yet more remarkable volume of "Bampton Lectures"—that masterly book in which the Divinity of Our Lord is maintained

against the most insidious doubts and suspicions of modern times. Those who have not the opportunity of hearing Mr. Liddon preach may yet form an adequate idea of his powers by the perusal of these volumes ; but only those who have heard him in the pulpit, and who know how oratorical qualities of a very high description are added to his intellectual powers, and how he is able to invest subtle and profound theological analysis with much of that charm with which Mr. Gladstone can invest a financial or statistical statement, can understand how it is that he can hold his congregation spell-bound whilst he preaches a sermon which occupies fourfold the time, and demands tenfold the attention required by the ordinary production of the modern pulpit.

There are not many more noticeable faces or figures to be met with now-a-days in the streets of "modern Athens," than that of Dr. Guthrie. The fame which Edinburgh once enjoyed as a great literary metropolis has departed. London now absorbs the intellectual energy of the Scotch as well as of the English people, and it would be impossible to discover anywhere in the picturesque streets of the northern capital such a goodly company of literary giants as might have been found there in the days of Sir Walter or of Christopher North. Nevertheless, all who know Edinburgh must acknowledge that it is still the home of a very numerous body of men distinguished in the world of letters. To this body the local clergy of all denominations are large contributors, for not a few eminent authors are to be found occupying the pulpits of the city.

Amongst these Dr. Guthrie holds, or rather held, a foremost place. Though occupying no position in society higher than that of a Presbyterian minister, his name has become known throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, and everywhere has been known in association with deeds which command the esteem and admiration of all men. Celebrated for the fervid eloquence he is in the habit of displaying in his sermons, Dr. Guthrie is yet more celebrated for the great work of practical benevolence which he has carried out in Edinburgh, and which has been the fountain-head from which have sprung so many streams of philanthropy in other parts of the country. For it is as the champion of the cause of ragged schools that he has gained his widest fame. There are not many towns in England where the worthy Scotch divine has not lifted up his voice on behalf of the admirable institution with which he has identified himself; not many places where the people have not had the opportunity of listening to one of these vigorous addresses full of humour and of pathos, in which he is in the habit of commending the cause of ragged schools to the world at large. How







Dr. Guthrie has laboured with tongue and pen and hand, on behalf of the outcast children of our great towns, hardly needs to be told. The forlorn Arabs of our streets have had few better friends, and certainly none more earnest and zealous, than this Scotch minister. In Edinburgh, where, under the cover of a picturesque antiquity, there lurks misery hardly less in degree than that which is to be found amidst the unromantic squalor of the Seven Dials or Mile End, he has had the opportunity of doing steady hard work for the benefit of the gutter children, and he has more than once told in thrilling language the story of the Edinburgh Original Ragged School, and the vast results which have flowed from it. Elsewhere his fervent and heart-stirring appeals have induced many to embark, in their own localities, in the good work which he has carried on so successfully in the Scottish capital, and the result has been that an amount of good has been done of which it is not easy to form an adequate conception, and that Dr. Guthrie has fully justified his claim to a place amongst the foremost philanthropists of the day.

It is not with Dr. Guthrie, the champion of ragged schools, however, but with Dr. Guthrie, the divine, that we have now more particularly to deal. The position which he occupies in Scotland is one to which no parallel can be found in the ecclesiastical system of this country. He is a minister of the Free Church. None of our readers can be ignorant of the great dispute which rent Scotland thirty years ago, and which culminated in that great disruption, the recollection of which still fills the hearts of not a few Scotchmen with a thrill of enthusiasm. With Chalmers, Cunningham, Candlish, and many other eminent men, Dr. Guthrie left the Church of Scotland, in which he had already secured by his talents a high position, in 1843, and joined heart and soul in the work of forming a Free Church. We are not about to dwell upon the merits of the great disruption dispute. There was unquestionably right on both sides; but on whatever side the balance of right might lie, it is certain that the spectacle presented when many hundreds of Scotch ministers voluntarily gave up their comfortable manses, and their secured incomes, and went out into the world trusting to the liberality of their fellow-men, and to the care of God, was one calculated to make a deep impression upon every susceptible mind. The younger and more enthusiastic of the men who took this bold step, were accordingly stirred by the very greatness of the deed to acts of heroic exertion, and for a time at any rate the Free Church of Scotland was the scene of a self-denying labour, and a spiritual zeal which are hardly to be matched anywhere in the religious history of modern times. Amongst the men whose names were brought to light at this time, were those



of not a few who have won a high place in the literature of our age, whilst still more abandoned all hope of literary distinction when they might well have entertained it, for the sake of devoting themselves heart and soul to the service of that Master for whose sake they considered they had abandoned all the advantages of state aid and protection, and thrown themselves upon the mercy of their fellow-men.

Dr. Guthrie had already achieved a reputation for himself as a powerful and popular preacher at the time of the disruption. After that event, however, he seemed stirred to new depths of zeal and earnestness. He engaged in the great work to which we have already adverted, in connection with the ragged school, and to which so many of the best years of his life were devoted; he preached with increasing power and acceptance in Edinburgh, and he employed his pen in the production of a series of volumes upon religious and devotional topics which soon established for him a wide popularity as an author, and which greatly increased the reputation he already enjoyed. As a preacher he held during his best years the foremost place amongst the ministers of the Free Church. It is true that his sermons had not the great intellectual power distinguishing those of his friend and fellow-labourer, Dr. Candlish; but they had what was much more acceptable to the general public, a copious supply of rich and fitting illustration, and an effective and eloquent style of delivery. Some one in reviewing one of Dr. Guthrie's books a few years ago, ventured to suggest that his sermons bore the same relation to ordinary sermons which the more gushing articles of the *Daily Telegraph* bear to the articles in other newspapers. There may be some truth in the comparison. But what then? All men have not the severe taste of Mr. Matthew Arnold, and we know as a matter of fact that there are thousands of persons who are captivated every morning by the fervent effusions of the "young lions" who roar magnificently in "the organ with the largest circulation in the world." We do not pretend to affirm that Dr. Guthrie's style of preaching is the highest style. Indeed, we should feel that we were shooting very wide of the mark, if we were to suggest anything of the kind. What we do affirm is that his style is racy, vigorous and picturesque; that he has at his command an inexhaustible variety of illustrations of every possible kind, and a copious supply of happy and appropriate language; that his manner has the fervent dash and swing which are so important to the rhetorician, if not to the orator, and that he has the art not only of making a deep impression upon those whom he addresses, but of fixing their attention for an indefinite length of time. He is, in fact, a popular preacher, who if he does not belong to the highest school, is yet very far removed from the

lowest. He is not a Liddon, or a Binney, or a Maurice. But then, on the other hand, he stands far above certain other popular preachers whose names need not be mentioned, and no one who has either heard him preach, or read one of his published volumes of sermons, can feel any surprise at the reputation which he has achieved.

Here is a quotation taken almost at random which furnishes some idea of the superabundant energy and richness of his style:—

“Still, by turning the eyes inward on ourselves we may form some conception of the mind of God; even as a captive child, born and retained in a dark dungeon, may learn something of the sun from the beam that, streaming through a chink of the riven wall, travels the grey lonely floor; or even as though I had never walked its pebbly shore, nor heard the voice of its thundering breakers, nor played in summer day with its swelling waves, I could form some feeble conception of the ocean from a lake, from a pool, or from this sparkling dew-drop, which, born of the womb of night, and cradled in the bosom of a flower, lies waiting, like a soul under the Sun of Righteousness, to be exhaled to heaven. Look at man, then. Is he a poet or a philosopher, a man of mechanical genius or artistic skill, a statesman or a philanthropist, or, better than all, one in whose bosom glow the fires of piety? It matters not. We perceive that his happiness does not lie in indolence, but in the gratification of his tastes, the indulgence of his feelings, and the exercise of his faculties, whatever they be. Assume the same to be true of God, and the conception, while it exalts, endears our heavenly Father to us. Does it not present Him in this most winning and attractive aspect, that the very happiness of Godhead lies in the forth-putting, along with other attributes of his goodness, love and mercy? We may be mistaken, and I would not venture to speak dogmatically, yet this does appear to shed a ray if not a flood of light on some mysterious passages in the providence of God. Shores on which man has never landed lie paved with shells; fields which his foot has never trod are carpeted with flowers; seas where he has never dived are inlaid with pearls; and caverns which he has never explored are radiant with gems of the finest form and the fairest colours. Well, it may be and it has been asked, for what purpose this lavish expenditure of skill and beauty upon scenes when there is neither an eye of intelligence to admire the work nor piety to adore its Maker? The poet, lamenting genius unknown and sinking into an ignoble grave, has touched his harp and sung of flowers that waste their sweetness on the desert air. And up upon the unfrequented shelf of a mountain rock, or rooted in the crevice of an

old castle wall, I have found a flower opening such blushing charms to the ardent sun as put to shame the proudest efforts of human skill. Did you never sit down beside such a flower, and courting its innocent society, ask the question, Fair creature, for what end were you made and adorned with so much beauty? So lovely, and doomed to bloom, and fade, and die unseen; it certainly does seem a waste of divine power and skill. Yet may it not be that angels as they flew by on their missions of judgment or of mercy, have stayed their wing over that lonely, lowly flower, and hovered there awhile to admire its beauty and adore its Maker? But whether or no, God Himself is there. Invisible, he walks these unfrequented solitudes, and with ineffable complacency looks on this little flower as His own mighty work, a tiny mirror of His infinite perfections. God, it is said, shall rejoice in His work; He made all things for Himself, even the wicked for the day of wrath. The minnow plays in the shallow pool, and leviathan cleaves the depths of ocean; winged insects sport in the sunbeam, and winged angels sing before the throne; but whether we fix our attention on His least or greatest works, the whole fabric of creation seems to prove that Jehovah delights in the evolutions of His powers, and in the display of wisdom, and love, and goodness."

No one will contend that such a passage as this belongs to a very high order of preaching, but it is nevertheless easy to understand that a preacher so rich in imagination and in illustration is certain to attain a high place in popular esteem.



## NO APPEAL.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

## LOOKING BACK.

"O Time, thou beautifier of the dead,  
 Adorner of the ruin, comforter,  
 And only healer when the heart hath bled,  
 Time the corrector when our judgments err;  
 The test of truth, love, sole philosopher."

BYRON.

TWELVE long months have sped away since the date of our last chapter. In accordance with the will of the old Squire, the chief of his landed property and personal effects had gone to his wife, whom he had made sole executrix. The farm, endowed with three hundred a year, had reverted to Mary, to hold in charge for her little son, and at the old lady's death the entire property would pass into his possession also, so that Master Charley, when of age, would be a rich man. In due time, Mary had recovered from the sudden blow of her husband's death, and almost seemed "Little Sunshine" herself again. But the day of the funeral had left a mark upon her mind which Time, omnipotent in so many things, was powerless to remove; for even on that last day she had lighted on one more proof of her husband's entire falseness.

The will had been read, and she had gone down into the nursery to get rid of her saddened thoughts in watching her boy at play, when he came running up to her with a piece of paper in his hand.

"Here, mamma," he said, "here is a letter for you. I picked it up in the passage just by your bedroom door."

She took it from him, and found it to be a fragment of a letter in a hand which she did not at all know; but, on reading it, found that it was evidently addressed to herself, and signed H. Penfold.

"Where did you find it, Charley?"

"Just outside your bedroom door, lying on the ground."

Then Mary remembered that on the previous day some clothes of her husband's had been moved out of the room by a servant,

and therefore supposed that it must have dropped from them. It was a torn half-sheet without an envelope.

The servant was sent for, and then the mystery was partly cleared up.

"Jane, when you brushed those clothes yesterday, did you find any papers in the pockets, or did you chance to search them?"

"No, ma'am; I never looked for no letters, or anything of that like."

"Do so now, then; and if you find any papers bring them to me."

In five minutes Jane returned, bringing with her one small scrap of paper of the same kind and colour as that in Mary's own hand.

"This is all I can find, ma'am," she said, "and this was in the pocket of the shooting-coat—the same coat that master wore the day he was brought home, after bein' drowned."

Together, the two pieces made up this fragment:—

*"The man in whose power you are is unhappily a scoundrel; but he is your husband, and by the law of the land you are as yet bound to him as I fully explained to you. Your cross is a hard one to bear, and I pray, as yourself must, that you may have grace and strength to bear it. (Then came a blank.) —in this your old friend Fitzgerald agrees with me. Be sure that you have us two as friends to rely on, in case that you actually need help and protection.*

*"Sincerely yours,*

*"H. PENFOLD."*

It was clearly part of a letter, addressed to herself, which had fallen into her husband's hands and never been delivered to her; and, though useless to her now, added yet one more item to the many bitter thoughts connected with him who was gone.

It was, in fact, as the reader sees, neither more nor less than a piece of that very letter Frank Stone had intercepted on the morning of his fatal visit to Clarke's pool, the rest of which he had torn up and thrown away as he crossed the fields.

"False," she murmured to herself; "false all the way through, to the very last. He must have got it from the postman just after we had that talk in the greenhouse, when I told him that I knew all Fanny's history."

She read it through once more, and then said—

"Here, Charley, boy; tear it up and toss it into the fire. It's only a scrap of an old letter, and of no use."

As the scraps of burning paper died away into white and red ash, she determined that the whole matter should from that day

forth be buried and utterly forgotten with the past. And so the last record of Frank Stone's falseness was never betrayed to any other human being. The shadow that still lingered behind him was dark enough already, she said to herself: "I will not willingly add a single iota to its weight. Let the dead past bury its own dead; and—as for the future, there is time enough yet in abundance."

Gradually, as the days went by, her health and strength came back. Charley was becoming a big, strong fellow. Fanny, so she heard, was still at home with her father; and all seemed to go well there. Her own father, at Langford, was as bright and brisk as ever—full of his work, and full of fun, whenever his young partner Fitzgerald was inclined for a joke. The old lady at the Manor House now and then drove over, in the family state carriage, to the Farm, to enquire for her grandson and daughter-in-law, and to assure both that she was still in the land of the living, in spite of her innumerable troubles. In short, the world went on pretty much as usual, as if Mr. Frank Stone and his father were still among the great people at Encomb. Everybody in her own little circle seemed, more or less, to be in a thriving condition, as far as Mary knew; and yet she herself, though without any distinct cause of trouble, appeared, somehow, ill at ease.

"My dear," said the old doctor, one day, as they walked up and down the beechwood avenue, "my dear, you don't seem to be yourself. There's a screw loose, somewhere, and I'll be shot if I can make out whereabouts it is."

"There are no screws loose, papa, and I don't know why there should be any. I have no trouble of any kind, *now*, as you know. The clouds have rolled away, and——"

"Yes, my dear, that's exactly it. The clouds *have* rolled away, and, yet, you are not the 'Little Sunshine,' that you used to be. That's exactly the point that puzzles me."

"Oh!" she replied gaily, "only give me time, and I shall soon be all right again."

"Time?—why how much time does a smart young woman——"

"Papa, I beg leave to remark that I am not a smart young woman at all."

"Well then, how much time does a young woman—(you are a young woman, I suppose,)—want to recover from a long fagging bout of nursing, after getting rid of a troublesome patient, and having all her other affairs settled for her, in by no means an unpleasant manner? It's folly to pretend, Mary, now, that you cared so tremendously for him who is gone. He was altogether unworthy of you, Mary, as you know in your own heart."

"I have never pretended to feel any deep grief for his loss,"



she answered slowly and gravely; "but that is no reason why it should be with me as if nothing whatever had happened. You are rather hard on me, I think, papa, and hardness from you is what I'm not used to, and what I cannot bear."

These few last words went to the doctor's heart, and were more than enough to disarm the old man in a trice. In a moment he had his arm round her waist, and after a hearty, paternal kiss, said—

"You cunning little puss, Mary; that's the way you get over me in a moment; as if I wanted to be hard, or say a single unkind word to my old darling; I'd rather bite my tongue off than annoy you, Mary, as you very well know. But the fact is, that that poor fellow, Fitzgerald, is so miserable; he's getting so pale and thin, and care-worn, and haggard, with over-work and anxiety, that I thought I must ride over here this morning, and see what you said to him yesterday, to send him home in such a frantic state of despair—or what he'd done to offend you."

"Done to offend me?" she repeated. "Who said he had done anything? or that he had offended me? Does Willy Fitzgerald send about his friends to make enquiries of this kind?"

"Not he," replied the doctor; "not he. He has no more notion that I am here to-day, than that I am at Exeter. He would be the very last man to send his friends on such an errand."

"What do you mean, then, by his saying or doing things to offend me, and by my saying something to him? I said nothing to him? I said nothing whatever to him."

"My dear Mary, I can't give you chapter and verse for what I neither saw nor heard. All I know is, that when Fitzgerald went away from Langford yesterday morning, he was in the brightest of spirits. He had three first-rate cases in hand; enough to make any fellow cheerful. First, a man had been thrown off a horse in Langford Lane, and pitched headlong into a great vat of hot mortar, broken his arm in two places over the iron edge of the vat, and been half-smothered in the compound—as nice a case as you could wish; secondly, old Mrs. Bargeman at the almshouses had swallowed three lemon pips, and wanted to persuade Willy that they had taken root and were growing up in her throat; and thirdly, old Jackson's wife in the Row, had just had twins, one with the most beautiful case of '*hydrocephalus*,' that was ever seen this side of Exeter. And, besides all this, he was going to visit you and Charley, which he always enjoys doing. Well, back he comes to Langford at seven o'clock last night, as silent as an oyster. 'Well, Fitz,' said I, 'what's the matter? Anything wrong with the twin, or won't the lemons ripen?'"

"'Deuce take the twins,' he replies, snappishly, 'you may hang both of them on the lemon trees, for what I care.'

"After that, Mary, I held my tongue, of course, as I did not wish to have my head quite bitten off. He thawed a little at dinner. But all I could get out of him, further, was that he had been over to the Manor Farm, and had seen you and Charley, and—yes—that you were both quite well, he believed; that was all."

"And what else could you possibly expect him to say, papa? And was that all he did say?"

"Every word, Mary. What else ought he to have said?"

"Nothing. Oh, nothing that I know of, papa. He was not here more than ten minutes altogether. Charley and I were both in the garden when he came, and we chatted together much as usual, and then all at once he said he must be off, and away he went."

"And that was all, was it, Mary?"

"Really, that was all. If anybody ought to be offended, it is myself, I think, not Mr. Willy Fitzgerald."

"But I don't know that he is offended, my dear; all I know is, that he came home to dinner silent and out of spirits, and utterly unlike himself, and I concluded that somebody had been giving it to him, and that, perhaps, you were the somebody."

"Then, sir," she replied, with a saucy laugh, "you are a very wicked old man, and have no business to make such hasty conclusions, and come over here scolding me, this fine summer afternoon. Now, come along into the house and rest, or you shall not have your bunch of roses, or the glass of sherry, which I believe you care for a great deal more than all the flowers."

And so in they went to the farm; the old doctor with the quiet conviction in his mind that somehow or other he had been checkmated, and his daughter that she had gained the victory.

And so indeed she had.

Willy Fitzgerald *had* called at the Farm the day before; had stayed only ten minutes; had talked much as usual, and suddenly gone away, as she said. All this was undeniably true. But in ten minutes a great deal can be done and said, without many words; and a great deal had been thus done and said at the Manor Farm. He had ridden over to Encomb with the full determination of asking Mary to be his wife. And though he had never uttered one word on the subject, she had read his intent the moment she set eyes on him. A man, be he ever so knowing,—unless much versed in the arts of feminine guile—too often carries his heart on his sleeve; and a shrewd, pretty woman rarely fails to find out when a crisis is at hand, in the madness that is consuming him.

First of all, Fitzgerald very awkwardly set about sending Charley away in chase of a butterfly that was hovering about a bed of roses at the opposite end of the garden. But the boy was as unwilling to be sent away as the butterfly to be caught, and Mary instantly detected the manœuvre.

Then he abruptly changed the topic, as if suddenly detected, and became tenderly, nervously anxious about her health; and next flew off at a tangent to some sea-weeds which he said that Penfold had collected, and was going to send out to the Farm for Charley.

Having once reached the neutral question of sea-weeds, and salt-water aquariums, Mary took good care that such safe ground should not be left. Of all delicate and dainty studies under the sun, she thought that sea-weeds was one of the daintiest and most delicate. She always had taken a deep interest in sea-weeds, and always should, not only for Charley's sake, but her own. It was really very good of Mr. Penfold, to think of her in the midst of all his parish work at St. Padron's, and so on, and so on, until Mr. Fitzgerald found that the subject of sea-weeds was an unfathomable, inexhaustible topic, and that if he stayed all night he should never get to the end of it, especially as there had been one or two glances at the equally fertile one of "anemones."

All he could do, therefore, was suddenly to discover how late it was, and drive sorrowfully home.

All this scene, of course, was freshly in Mary's mind as she administered the glass of sherry to the old doctor, and adorned him with his bunch of roses; and until she knew for certain how much of that scene was within his knowledge, she was a little nervous as to the issue of the tournament. But, having dexterously wormed this out of the old man, she grew bold and triumphant.

"Good-bye," she said, as the doctor stepped into his gig. "Good-bye, papa, and tell Willy that I am anxiously on the lookout for the sea-weeds."

"For the *what*, Mary? Sea-weeds? Where on earth is Fitzgerald to get sea-weeds from, with sixty cases in hand? I am not so young as I used to be, Mary, and he is obliged to do by far the lion's share in the work."

"What an inquisitive, old, old, old, very old man, papa, you are getting, to be sure. Now, at this very moment, you're dying to know where he is to get sea-weeds from! Well, I shan't tell you. But, yes, I *will* tell you. He gets them out of the sea—at least, so I think his friend told him. At all events, I'm dying to have them. Good-bye."

And then away rattled the doctor and his grey horse. His ride homewards occupied him some forty minutes; but the riddle



was too deep for him to solve ; and he had, after all his toil, no news for Fitzgerald. Indeed he could not even dare to hint at the nature of his visit, though he faithfully delivered the message.

"She is dying to have the sea-weeds, Fitz !"

"Who ?" says Willy.

"I really beg your pardon. I had to call this afternoon and ask for the old lady at the Manor House, and so I thought it was only fair to call and see the young lady at the Farm. She and young Charley are both well ; and, as I said, she is dying to have the sea-weeds. That's the message which she charged me to deliver."

"Ah ! yes," he answered in a careless fashion, "Penfold has collected a whole packet of them for the youngster, and promised to send them up to me. I must call and fetch them the first time I go that way. I thought Mary looking rather pale and—far from well yesterday."

"She was well enough, Fitz, to-day, and as full of fun, the monkey, as a young woman could be—treating her old father in the most disrespectful manner. But I say, old fellow, you're not the thing yourself, Fitz—what's the matter with you ?"

"With *me* ?" replies Fitzgerald, as if in profound amazement ; "who says there is anything the matter with me ?"

"Well, I say so, for one," answers the shrewd old man, who saw that the arrow had hit the mark ; "I say so, for one ; and I have seen too much of you for the last ten years not to know when there's a screw loose."

"Tell me, then, where the loose screw is ?"

"In the first place, you're off your feed ; you are getting to look haggard and care-worn, and thin, for a young man of thirty ; and if you were a patient of mine, I should say that you were over head and ears in debt—or—in love—and pack you off to the seaside. There—now the murder's out, Fitz."

"No, doctor, not fully out. The accused is in the dock ; and there are two indictments against him. Which do you select to go upon ?"

"Certainly not debts, my boy, for I don't believe you spend fifty pounds a year on your own self—though you are pretty lavish, I believe, when that hungry parson at St. Padron's is hard up for his church and people. So I must decide on Cupid as my senior counsel. How say you, prisoner at the bar—'Guilty, or not guilty ?'

But the prisoner at the bar, instead of answering to this plea, suddenly waxed impatient of the harness that was being fitted on to him, and began to jib.

"My dear doctor," he said, "I am much obliged to you for

all your tender interest in my poor welfare ; but I really am quite unworthy of it. The fact is, that I am in robust health just now, and sitting here, after dinner, wasting your time and mine with this fit of joking, when I ought to be down in the village looking after my friend in the barrel of mortar."

"Don't trouble yourself any more to-night about him, Fitz, as I called on my way home, saw his wife as well as himself, and found all going on well. He was sound asleep even then, and had been asleep for more than two hours ; had not rambled much in his talk since yesterday evening at seven p.m. ; and, altogether, seems likely to do well—if that woman that waits on him would only let that ' everlasting clack ' of a tongue of hers be quiet now and then. *That's* enough to wake the seven sleepers, and to make a sick man wish himself in his coffin."

After this there was no escape for Fitzgerald ; and he saw that there was none, as the doctor was fully aware.

"Willy," said the old man, after a pause (he seldom called him by his Christian name)—"you and I have been old friends for many years—a glass of good wine will do you good, and won't hurt me ; sit down again, and as we drink one, let us have a good talk."

Then the two sat down.

"I am sorry that you can't drink port wine. Good as sherry is, 'Port is the stuff for men.' So said my father, old Lieutenant Vining, thirty years ago, when he was an old man of seventy. But you youngsters can't drink it now, it seems, though whether it's the wines or the men that have failed I cannot say."

"Both, doctor, most likely. I have heard my father talk in the very same way. There was a Beef-steak Club to which he belonged in Sandyford for the last forty years of his life ; they met once a month at each other's houses in turn, just twelve in number, and each man cleared his bottle of port, as a matter of course. That must have been good wine. For bad port is worse than bad sherry ; logwood and common brandy must do a fellow more harm than Marsala and burnt sugar ; and these old codgers never seemed the worse for what they took."

"No doubt, Fitz, you are right ; and I wish that you would follow their example for once, and find a corner for a good bottle of this old ' twenty-two ' port. You look as if you wanted a good puff of new life blown into you."

"A puff of new life, minus the headache, I should not at all mind ; but, meanwhile, I must be content with sherry."

Then the dialogue suddenly came to an end ; and, after a pause, the doctor had to begin again.

"Fitz," said the old man suddenly, "my daughter tells me

that I am becoming very inquisitive in my old age ; and I am now going to run the risk of your judgment as well as hers. Did you go all the way over to Encomb yesterday merely to tell Mary that your friend Penfold was hunting up sea-weeds for Charley ?”

For an instant Fitzgerald hesitated ; the least possible flush passed across his face as he answered, rather abruptly—

“ No, doctor ; I did not. I went over on purpose to ask your daughter to be my wife, and——”

“ By Jupiter, I thought so !” interrupted the lively old doctor, “ I thought so—I would have bet two to one that you did.”

“ What possible reason could you have had for thinking so, doctor ? Surely Mrs. Stone could never have hinted at such a thing ?”

“ Not in the faintest or remotest degree, Fitz. She merely said that you had dropped in for a short visit, chatted with her and the boy for five minutes, talked of some sea-weeds, and gone away in a fearful hurry.”

“ Then how on earth could you ever guess why I went there ?”

“ Why, Fitz, as I said before, you’re out of sorts ; and your complaint seemed to me to be either ‘ debts ’ or Dan Cupid. In no other way could I account for the hungry face that has been yours for the last three months. Well,” he added, after a pause, “ you may as well make a clean breast of it ;—why didn’t you fulfil your intention, and ask the question which you went to ask ?”

“ The lady prevented me.”

“ Stuff, stuff, Fitz—nonsense ! A woman prevent you from asking a question ? That’s just a bit of the cant of these fast days. It wasn’t so in my time. Then, if a man made up his mind to ask a woman to be his wife—he did it ; and if he made up his mind to have her—he generally succeeded. But, you young fellows now-a-days seem to lose all your pluck the moment you come in sight of the fortress to be stormed—or, to speak more politely, of the object of your adoration. How *can* any young woman prevent your asking any question you choose to propound ?”

“ I can’t tell you *how*, doctor. I can only say what happened to me. In my case, the lady did prevent me. I can’t pretend to any experience in such matters, though perhaps you can ; but there are few things, I imagine, that a young, pretty, and clever woman cannot prevent a man from doing, or drive him to do, if she thinks fit. In the first place, she saw that I wanted to get rid of Charley,—in pursuit of a butterfly. A word from her would have sent him off—but this word she took care not to say. Then she fastened upon the subject of sea-weeds, and I was cross-examined to such a degree on *Ulvas* and *Griffithsias*, and then, to crown



all, threatened with *Anemones*, that I was fairly driven out of the field."

The wine, and the cheery old doctor's talk, were clearly now fast unlocking Fitzgerald's heart, and already he looked brighter and more at his ease than he had done for many a day.

"Well, Fitz, young men in love seldom take advice,—nor old ones either, for that matter,—but if I were pressed, mind—if I were pressed—to give advice in such a case as yours, I should say,—wait, man! Don't be in a hurry! Women are great sticklers for little points of what they call etiquette, especially in all matters connected with marrying, and giving in marriage; and they wouldn't break one of their little laws of the Medes and Persians, to save a man's soul. One of their laws is that a widow mustn't marry until two years after her husband's death. She may flirt, and scandalise Mrs. Grundy by the inflammatory manner in which she makes war on every hapless male biped that falls in her way: shock all her relations and disgust all his: and still be only doing the correct thing; but if she marries, it's all over with her. My advice, then, is wait, man, wait."

"But, Mrs. Stone——"

"Mrs. Fiddlestick, Fitz," interrupted the doctor; "call her by her proper name—Mary. You will be calling her Mrs. Stone to her face some day, and then it will be a pretty kettle of fish."

"Well, doctor, Mary is surely not a woman to be bound up by any such trumpery point of etiquette as you talk of."

"You call it trumpery, my friend; but it's a part of her social creed. It's worse than calling on a new married couple when it's their turn to call on you; what *would* Mrs. Grundy say?"

"Hang Mrs. Grundy," says the young man.

"By all means hang her,—if she's worth the rope; but keep out of her reach, for all that."

"What would be the use of waiting, doctor, in this case? Would there be *any* use?"

"Ah! there, Fitz, I can't help you a single grain. Not one word can I say as to the paulo-post future in a lady's case. There is no knowing how, when, where, or what the female mind may next decide on as the thing to be done. *Varium et mutabile semper*, must have been a real woman's epitaph. All I say is, 'Wait!'"

This, doubtless, was sound and good advice; but what young man in love ever took advice, unless it happened to fall in with his own exact views, wishes, and convictions? And, Fitzgerald, wise in many things, was here a sharer in the folly common to man.

"No doubt, doctor, your advice is good," he said, rising up to

put on his coat as he spoke; "the best I could possibly have, but waiting is just the thing I can't do any longer. I've tried it for months and months—aye, and years, too, and it doesn't agree with me."

"Very well, Fitz; it's true, all the same. Sleep on it, my boy; sleep on it; and let it come fresh upon you in the morning. Let us quit the whole subject, now. How is *the* twin? and how is old Bargeman?"

"Thank God, doctor, the poor little wretch has got the whooping-cough at last; and the other is sure to take it. I don't think they will trouble the poor mother many days. As for Bargeman, all I can say is, I wish that she *had* swallowed the pips, and that they *were* growing up in her throat! That woman will be the death of me. 'Well,' said I to her this morning, 'Mrs. Bargeman, if you still are positively certain that the pips are growing, and the tree should happen to bear fruit,—a single lemon will be enough,—you will die very slowly and gradually, as the fruit ripens. Suffocation, however—*internal* suffocation, of course—is not a painful death, and you will be sensible to the last. If I were you, I should set about making my will soon. Some of those foreign plants grow rapidly,—especially in a warm, moist climate.' That, I think, frightened the old croaker a little; but I finished the whole business by promising to come in and see her to-night, before she signed her will."

Then the young man in love put on his hat, and set out for the almshouses.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### PEACE BY THE SEA.

"Who by repentance is not satisfied,  
Is not of heaven, nor earth."—SHAKSPEARE.

THE first few days that Fanny spent in her old home were days of not unclouded happiness. Not that her father or her brothers were wanting in any one point that might assure her of their hearty love and entire forgiveness; for, indeed, they were often too kind; too constant, in fact, in little attentions, and words, and actions, for her especial benefit and comfort. It seemed as if they could never do enough for her. Neither the old man nor his sons seemed ever weary of waiting upon her, consulting for her pleasure, and, in their rough way, trying to show her that the past was forgotten and forgiven, so far as she was concerned, entirely.

And this, to her, was inexpressibly touching. It was, in fact, painfully so at last; and tears more than once forced their way into her eyes, as she tried to thank them for some little act of unexpected kindness.

"You are all too good to me," she said one morning at breakfast; "much too good. And how shall I ever thank you for all the kind things you do and say to me?"

"Never mind no thanks, Fanny," answers burly Sam, in his rough pea-jacket, as he goes off with a pile of nets over his shoulder. "You bide where you be, make a good breakfast, and look after the old man. That's all we wants, isn't it, father?"

Then the giant lights his pipe with a bit of wood from the embers, and the two young men go away together to their day's work.

"I don't want no looking after, now, my gell," says the old fisherman. "You've put new life into me, you have; and I shall soon pick up now. Get your hat, child, if you've finished, and bring your nets out into the shade, under the tree, while I smokes a bit."

This was done in a trice, and presently the old man was cozily settled in his arm-chair, under the green boughs, while Fanny worked away busily at her old task of mending the nets.

"Quite like old times, Fanny, isn't it?"

"Not quite," replies the girl, looking up from her work, with a bright smile on her face, "not quite, father. After all the long, weary, bitter trouble and shame I have brought upon you, it can't be quite the same. The old place is the same, and you're the same, and Sam and Jem the same; it's me that's changed. And, O father, it cuts me to the heart every time I look at you to see how thin and wished \* you are. It's all my doing, all mine. Can you ever forgive me, father?"

"Forgive ye, Fanny? that's done long ago. I said bitter things, and hard things of 'e, when you fust went away, and I swore that if ever I set eyes on the big villain that ticed you away, he should know what a father's curse was; but it's all took out o' my hands now, by what you tells me, and if God Almighty has forgive him, what be I to say I won't forgive? Pahson says to me the other night, he says, 'Do the thing right out, Miller, and don't have no grudges!' How could I say a word to hurt 'e my dear, when you did come back, as I prayed the Lord to bring 'e, and kneeled down to me, and give me new life, as ye have; why, bless 'e I ain't eat such a breakfus' of fried taties as I did this

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\* "Wished," Devonshire for "wasted," "forlorn."



mornin', no, not fur months and months ! No, no, my dear, do you put it all clean away, right out o' mind."

"I wish I could," she answered, eagerly, putting her arm tenderly round his neck as she spoke, and kissing him, "I wish I could. The fault wasn't all *his*, father, bad as he was, and my share in it is bitter enough to look at for many a long day to come. It sticks to me, it does ; and many a long night I lie awake dreamin' of it, and goin' over it again, and again. And then I thinks of you, and how you was left all alone, a'most—watchin' and waitin' for the child that had brought shame on you. This is what I can't get rid of, father. But God bless you for forgivin' me—and I'm sure He will, and forgive me, too, I hope, all the wrong I've done."

"Yes, yes, my gell, He don't do things by halves—*He* don't. He ain't like Bucky, He ain't got no petticular pets, that gets to Heav'n by reglar pew-rents. It's a roughish way back to Him, but when you gets there it's for one and all alike. You don't get the door shut in your face till they see whether you've paid all the pikes or no."

"It's a roughish way, father, but it's a safe one, thank God, as my kind, good friends at the Dovecot learned me." And as she mentioned the Dovecot, she thought of her child—and of his father, now at rest in the old churchyard at Encomb—and then a little flush of sudden joy and pain shot quickly across her face.

"Why, you ain't well, my gell," cried the old man, watching her narrowly. "What's the matter—what is it you're all of a tremble fur?"

"I was thinking, father, of my boy, safe and sound, at the Dovecot, with all them kind friends about him, and then of his father—dead, and buried, and gone, and never set eyes on his own child—never once. And it's months since I saw the boy myself—and I long for him, sometimes, father—my heart pines to see him, if it's only for an hour. But I know that he can't come back here for the neighbours to point at, and bring fresh shame on old Miller's cottage. No, no, that can't be."

"Who says it can't be, my dear, if your own father says it can be? As to them that points their fingers, let 'em point, if they likes. It don't signify much to me, now, Fan, though time was when it touched me pretty sharp. I'm too thankful to care much now you're come back to me. Praps they'll look after their own business when they've a done lookin' after mine."

And then the old man knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and walked away to the garden gate, over which he stood looking out towards the line of silvery sea that glimmered on the horizon.

His back was turned to the girl, but her quick eyes had already seen what he had tried to hide—that his last words to her had stirred up the very depths of his heart, and that his eyes were full of tears. But there he stood, with his hand shading his eyes, as he pretended to be watching some far-off sail upon the sea-line, and the fresh morning breeze came blowing idly on his bare head and snowy hair.

Stealing up softly behind him, and clasping his arm, she whispered in his ear—

“No, no, father; they shan’t have the chance. It’s bad enough to have me here—I’ll be content as I am for the present. By-and-bye, when you can spare me for a day, I’ll get a lift by the coach over to Branscombe, and see how the boy gets on. I wrote a line to my kind, good friend there, last week, and no doubt—”

“But, my dear, I can’t spare ’e for a day, now, and I can’t spare ’e at no other time. Now I’ve got ’e safe and sound at St. Padron’s, I intends to kip my gell here; no coach journeyin’s, and no goin’ away, for me. They won’t suit, they won’t.”

And so the matter was settled for a time, and Fanny, with a quiet and thankful heart, determined that not one word of discontent should escape her lips. Some day, she thought, he will get used to my being away from him for a few hours, and then I shall get as far as the Dovecot. But she was to see her boy much sooner than she imagined.

Not many days after this, as they all sat at breakfast, the postman knocked at the door with a letter—a letter for Fanny Miller. She knew the handwriting in a moment, and hastily tore it open. Thus it ran:—

“FRIEND,

“Thy child is well and happy, and I see by thy letter, which came many days since, that thou also art well, and that God hath led thee home, safely by a way that thou knewest not; and there I trust thou hast found peace in the love and forgiveness of thy father, of which thine own words did tell me with such joy. Friend, all this is the Good Master’s doing, and not thine, and so Joshua and myself—after being much exercised in pondering over all thy history—feel it borne in upon us that the boy’s best place is with his mother, now. He has drawn himself very near to our hearts, and, if it had been so ordered, he should have grown up here as our own child, but our will is not the Lord’s; and so we purpose that he shall go away at once, lest, by

longer tarrying, he make it harder to part. May God's gracious hand keep both thee and him.

"Thy true friend,

"S. TREFFRY.

"P.S.—Business, if the Lord will, taketh Joshua to Sandymouth to-morrow, and the boy will travel with us in the carriage, so as to be with thee about noon."

"What's the news, then, Fanny?" said the old man. "We don't have such a many letters here."

"It's good news, father; good news about the boy. He's well, and the good people at the Dovecot are coming to Sandymouth this very morning, in their own carriage; and—father—they say that they're going to bring him with them!"

"Read us the letter, my gell, and let's hear it all."

Then she read it—her voice trembling for joy, as she read—and listened eagerly for his answer.

"It's all true and good, what the lady do say, Fanny; and when the boys is off, I'll go down to the minister and tell him what's happed. Maybe, he'll have a word to say."

No sooner were Sam and Jem fairly off, than the old man put on his Sunday coat, took a thick stick from the corner, and set out for the Vicarage.

"I must be pretty early," he said, "or the minister 'll be off on his rounds. Give me the letter, my gell, and I'll read it to him."

As for Fanny, she was almost beside herself for joy. Her first business was to clear away all trace of breakfast, and then set the cottage in the very neatest of apple-pie order. It all seemed to her a bright and happy dream. Every sound she heard—the far-off roar of the great waves on the sandy beach, the far-off chime of bells from the old church-tower, the hum of the bees in the garden, the rustle of the green leaves, were all music in her ears. Could it be that she was here—here, in her own home again, among her own people, all the past forgiven, and her own darling child that she hadn't seen for months, coming back to her safe and sound?—It was too good—too good to be true; and yet it *was* true.

"God bless the old man," she said softly to herself in her heart, "and help me to comfort him in his trouble, and bear whatever there is to bear when my boy comes, bravely, so as to save him."

And then she hurried off into the garden to gather a nosegay for her old mistress, fairly breaking out into a song for joy as she



stooped to pick out the best of the dark sweet-williams, cabbage, roses, and scented pea-flowers that grew along by the wall.

When Miller reached the Vicarage, he found Penfold just ready to start for his morning's work.

"No bad news, I hope, Miller, to bring you here at this time in the day?"

The story was soon told, and the letter read, and the vicar, as usual, had a few prompt words ready by way of advice.

"Now, minister, shall we kip the boy, or send him away somewhere to be took care of?"

"Well, Miller, to my mind it seems plain enough. God has brought your girl back to you again, safe and sound, when you had given her up for lost. And you have said let bygones be bygones. It may be hardish, perhaps, at first, but if you want to win all her heart for ever, keep the boy where he is, and as soon as he's big enough, let him take a turn with Sam in the boats. It will soon be a nine days' wonder among the neighbours, and, maybe a worry to you at first—to you and to her too—but when they've had their say, the neighbours will soon forget all about it. Besides, he must come home some day now that he's left the Dovecot, and the sooner the better, it seems to me."

"And so it does to me, minister. You hits the nail on the head—the right nail, too, with the right hammer. I'll do it right off, and kip the boy at home for good and all."

"It's the right thing and the best thing, Miller, though not the easiest. The only thing to do with old grudges is to wipe 'em out, as I said to you the other night."

And so they parted.

When the old man got back to the cottage, Fanny could not be seen anywhere in the house, or in the garden, and for one moment, only for one, his mind misgave him. It flashed through him for an instant that she had misunderstood his words about seeing the minister, and had gone off into Sandymouth to meet the carriage and stay her boy from coming out to St. Padron's. But then he all at once remembered that in the back garden was the old stump of a cherry tree, that, in the old days of long ago, she used to stand on and watch the carriages on the dusty road.

And there, indeed, perched in her old place, with a gay ribbon in her hat, and her face all flushed with eager joy, he found her gazing down the long, winding, level track that led in to the town.

"They can't be here yet, Fanny, my gell, not for an hour to come; it's barely eleven now. But they shall have a welcome when they do come, every one of 'em. Do'e hear, my dear? *every one* of 'em, I said. So you may get the little cot out of the lumber-room, and make ready for young master."

“God bless you, father! You shall never repent of all your goodness to me—never!”

And then she jumped down off the old stump, and was off like a shot into the house once more to see that all was ready for the visitors. As for the little cot, it had been got ready an hour before, and now, with snow-white sheets and a bunch of lavender on the coverlet, looked the very essence of neatness and comfort. She had a good look at it, however, again, and then went back to her watch.

“It’s all ready, father, now; but it seems to me as if the morning would never, never be gone. It’s ages since breakfast.”

But twelve o’clock came at last; next appeared a little cloud of white dust far away on the shining road, and out of the cloud emerged a black speck which grew into a dot, the dot into a noisy blotch, and presently the carriage was at the gates. A moment more, and the boy was in his mother’s arms, and the little old lady in the silver-grey dress, grey bonnet, and grey silk mittens, standing at the cottage door and talking to its master.

“Friend,” said the soft clear voice which Fanny knew so well, “Friend, thou hast found thy sheep that was lost. Her wanderings are all over at last, and now I have brought thee a little lamb, if thou wilt open the fold once more.”

“Aye, aye, my lady! there’s room for him here, and welcome, too; and a kindly welcome for you and yours, ma’am, whenever they likes to come, for saving my child when she was nigh to perishing. If it hadn’t a bin for you, neither of ’em would have been here to glad my eyes this day.”

“It was all the good Master’s doing, friend, that brought me to the place where the poor mother and her babe lay in the wintry snow. Thank Him, not Sarah Treffry.”

“Yes, ma’am, I do thank Him, I hopes; but there’s many a horse comes to the water and won’t drink, many a hand that finds gold in the pocket and won’t take out a farden, and many a one that falls among thieves, and plenty that goes by on the other side. So I must say, God bless’e ma’am—to you that poured in oil and wine, and took care of the poor traveller by the roadside.”

Then the little lady came into the clean, tidy kitchen, and sat down in the old oak settle by the fire, though it was a bright, sunny morning. Opposite to the fire was a tall kitchen dresser, covered with a white cloth, and decked with shining pewter plates and brass candlesticks, against which the dancing flame of the crackling wood fire glanced brightly.

Everything looked as neat as a new pin, though all was of the commonest, cheapest kind; and on a little round wooden table lay an old black bible, and near it a pair of spectacles. The keen,

shrewd eye of the lady took in every one of these little features at a glance, and the whole sight pleased her.

"What will'e be pleased to make use of, ma'am?" asked the old man, waiting upon her as if she had been a queen; "it isn't much that we've got to offer'e that's fit for gentlefolks, but you're kindly welcome to all that's here. There's a bit of fresh honey from the bees in the garden, and a mossel of bread, if so be you would like it;" and here he suddenly came to a full stop, for he found himself just on the point of adding, "and a drop of rale French brandy."

"Thank thee, friend, I need no refreshment just now, as it is not so long since I broke my fast, and we go back to lunch. Besides, it is feast enough for me to see how tidily and well Fanny looketh after her father's comfort in this pleasant, cleanly home. After all thy troubles, friend, it seemeth as if peace had settled down here at last; aye, and peace that will endure, if I may judge by thy face and thy daughter's."

"Aye, ma'am, she brought peace along with her when she come home, she did. Why, bless'e, my lady, 'twas like new life to me, and I haven't bin the same man ever since; it were all dark enough before then."

"Yes, friend; but it is out of darkness oftentimes, that the Master bringeth light; and through the way of strife and trouble He led thee to peace. And it is well for thee to think that she who brought thee trouble should at last bring comfort; and well to say so to the poor wanderer." Here she looked kindly at Fanny, who, with her child, stood by the corner of the dresser, listening to every word that passed. "Such words speak pardon, and a father's pardon is joy to the child that loves him."

Tender and wise words like these grace the lips that utter them, and scatter sunshine wherever they fall. Father and daughter both felt their gracious message. And then there came upon the little company a short and golden silence, that the boy happily broke.

"Mother," he cried, "I should like to see the ships that I've heard tell of; and the great, big waves, that you said was here."

"Some day, Frank, some day, you shall."

"And wilt thou forget the pigeons," said the old lady, "and old Dorcas, and the grey ponies? Not all, I hope!"

"No, no; I shan't forget them. I likes 'em too much for that. And Bob, too; my love to Bob!"

"And if *he* ever forgets his old friends at the Dovecot, ma'am, here is one that's got the name written on her heart, and will keep him mindful of old days, and all your goodness to me, and Mr. Joshua's. I've no words to thank you, ma'am, as I said long,



long ago ; when I woke up, and was safe in your house—me and my child. But I never forgot you in my poor prayers, that God's blessing may be on you and yours ; never."

Then the boy ran up to her with the bunch of old-fashioned flowers that Mary had gathered, and Sarah Treffry having kissed him, shook hands with father and daughter, and went down to her carriage at the gate.

When they had reached the gate, the old lady said softly, as they shook hands :

"And is all well with thee, Fanny?"

"Yes, ma'am ; all, all is well. But *he*—is—dead ; as I wrote in my letter. And it is hard to bear, sometimes, even now, ma'am. For I did love him, once—and——"

"It was but natural thou shouldest have loved him, Fanny ; but God takes away what we love sometimes,—and yet He leaves us something to love, still. Pour out thy love, then, on thy child, and watch and pray for him, that he may grow up in the Lord, and be a blessing to thee."

Then she stepped lightly into her cozy carriage, behind the two well-fed, comfortable horses, and rolled smoothly away towards the town.

And, from the old stump of the cherry-tree, Fanny watched it winding away further and further in the distance, until she could see it no more, and then went back to the cottage with joy in her heart, such as she had not known for many a day.

This is nearly the last glimpse we shall have of Fanny Miller ; but it is enough to show fairly the tone and drift of her life for many a day.

The only bar to her perfect happiness was the chance, idle words, and idle looks, of such among her neighbours as felt inclined to thank God in their hearts that "they were not as other men." The bitterest and worst of such words and looks came from women of her own class, who, from envy or ill-will, had prophesied evil long before. But even to their enmity she grew used at last, and—so long as it did not touch her father—indifferent ; and so, by degrees, it died out. Cloud and sunshine had been wildly mingled in her young life, and now, after some stormy days, she had fallen upon days of quiet which will gradually ripen into peace.

Her chief pleasures now are watching her boy grow up to be a strong, hardy, and stout sailor ; and doing all that a loving heart and gentle hand can do, to bring down the old man's gray hairs without sorrow to the grave. It is a kindly, happy task, and will teach her all the fulness and blessing that lie hidden in the word *home*.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

## HIS OWN WAY.

“Preach patience to the stormy blast, or restless tide,  
But not to him that swears he loves ; he’s mad.”

CARSTAIRS.

FITZGERALD saw Mrs. Bargeman on that eventful night of the lemon pip catastrophe, helped to make her will—by being a witness to it, and after telling her old factotum, Sarah, that the sick woman was in no possible danger whatever—that, in short, there was nothing whatever the matter with her—walked slowly home to the cottage.

It was a quiet, moonlight night, as he walked home, and he pondered as he went, on the old doctor’s sage advice ; but the more he pondered, the less inclined was he to take it.

“It’s all very well,” he thought, “to tell me to be patient, but there is a time for all things, and I’ve waited long enough. Mary was coaxed, or cajoled, into marriage with a man that she didn’t care for,—and cannot regret, now that he’s dead. He has been in his grave all but two years, and it’s surely time enough now for her to have made up her mind as to whether she cares for me, or not. Some answer or other I *must* have from her,—now,—at once ; or else, at all events, I will know the reason why. Of course I’ll sleep on it, as the old man says. I can’t do anything to-night, or to-morrow, perhaps ; but I’ll have no more shilly-shallying, at all events.”

Having come to this sturdy resolution, he found himself at the surgery door. The old doctor was gone to bed, and the young one soon followed him.

The next morning at breakfast, they met as usual, but the old man carefully avoided all allusion to the conversation of the previous night.

“If this madman has altered his mind,” he thought, “he won’t tell me of it at once, and if he has not, all the advisers in Christendom won’t make him swerve from his determination. I know him of old.”

And so the event proved. Fitzgerald himself was the first to touch on the topic to be avoided.

“Well, doctor,” said he, “I have taken your advice, and slept on it.”

“So I see, Fitz ; and all the brighter and better you look for your sleep. But it’s one thing to pretend that you have charged

a gun, and another to fire it off. The real question is, what do you intend to do next? Are you in your senses, or still mad?"

"Only so far mad, doctor, that I think a man is at all events worth answering; and a lady ought at least to know her own mind."

"No doubt, Fitz, she does know it—every woman pretty well knows that—though she may try to hide it from herself and from you. The real difficulty is to make her tell it. She is not bound to show her hand to everybody that comes—especially if she wants to win the trick."

"But, is every woman, think you, always on the look-out for winning the trick, as you call it? Is there nothing like truth, and straightforwardness, and simplicity left among women?"

"Well, Fitz, in this case it seems to me that there must be a good deal left of what is real, and true, and attractive, or you wouldn't be so tremendously eager in pursuit. Besides, in Mary's case, you must not forget what she has already undergone, though I, like an old fool, have only the comfort of thinking that her own father was the means of giving her into the hands of a knave. Matrimony may not be so very tempting, if suddenly forced upon her, after such a taste of it."

"Ah!—but, doctor, that match was marriage without much real love on *her* side, and not a spark of it on his. She never could have cared a straw for him. Now, a man proposes for her, who never loved any woman but her—and for whom he can't help thinking she did once care, if ever so little, at one time."

"All which, if true," says the doctor, "strengthens my advice a hundred-fold. I say again, do not be in such a confounded hurry."

"Just the very reverse, it seems to me," replies the madman. "I should say, don't let the matter rest in doubt for a single week longer. If she cares for me, as I think she does, make her speak out her mind at once. I don't ask her to marry me to-day or to-morrow, but to give me some definite answer, that I may live on in hope, or decide on leaving the place at once. For it has come to that, doctor," he added gravely; "I must either stay here, with the clear understanding that some day she comes back to her old home here, as my wife, or else I must set up my tent alone, elsewhere."

The dialogue continued some time longer between the two men, but the drift of it remained unchanged, and the upshot seemed inevitable.

"So be it, Fitz," were the old man's last words; "so be it, then, if you will have it so. If you will run your head against the post, I can't prevent you."



Three days after this, Fitzgerald called at St. Padron's and got from his old friend Penfold the little packet of sea-weeds for Charley, and the next day he rode over with them to the Manor Farm. It was a soft, grey afternoon in May when he set out, the air still and sultry, and heavy thunder-clouds covered the whole sky. The hedge-rows were white with snowy hawthorn, and scented with purple violets, though he was far too deeply absorbed in thought to notice either the scented blossom, or threatening sky, and rode slowly and moodily on through the narrow winding lanes to Encomb. But, think as he would, he could decide on no one fixed plan of operation on his arrival at the Farm. He went over all sorts of preparatory ground, and tried a dozen different modes of approaching the object to be aimed at, but, try as he would, not one seemed satisfactory. At last, however, out of all the tangled schemes, he fixed on one, and to this he resolved to adhere, if possible. But his whole string of ingenious schemes after all was but a house of cards, and it fell to pieces at the first touch of a strange hand.

There is a chapter of accidents in every case, on the exact cast of which the keenest foresight cannot reckon. One thing he had determined on was to avoid all allusion to Frank Stone; and yet to this very topic he was drawn in spite of himself. He had made up his mind that Mary would be dignified, and on the watch against any familiarity of tone or speech, and of course keep that monkey of a boy Charley with her all the time he was there. He was wrong in every one of these points.

When he had reached the Farm he asked for the lady of the house, and was told that she and Master Charles were in the long avenue.

"Would he like to walk down the avenue, or should Jane go and fetch her mistress?"

"Jane need not trouble herself," said the visitor. "He would easily find Mrs. Stone himself."

Away, therefore, he went, through the old-fashioned, square gardens, which were divided into sections by trim borders of shining box, walking hastily, and with a riding-whip idly cutting off the heads of many flowers on either side of his path as he went.

In two minutes he was under the shade of the tall beech-trees, and the boy had come running up to him with shouts of welcome when he saw who it was; for Fitz was a great favourite.

"Oh, mamma," he cried, "here's the doctor coming, and he's got a whip in his hand, slashing away with. I shall go and meet him."

And then away he ran, coming back presently, leading the doctor by the hand, saying—

"Here he is, mamma, and he has got my sea-weeds, he says, in his pocket."

Then the sea-weeds were produced, examined, and pronounced very beautiful. Charley and his mother were both delighted, and warm in their thanks to the donor, seeming, indeed, never weary of turning over the leaves of the little book in which they were arranged.

Suddenly, however, to his astonishment Mary said—

"Now, Charley, pack up your treasures, and carry them in, and show them to Jane. She would like to see them, I'm sure."

And in a moment the boy was off like a shot, and Fitzgerald found himself alone with the lady of whom he had been thinking and talking so much for many a long day. An hour ago such a piece of good fortune seemed to him beyond all hope. Now, it was his. Here was his charming cousin Mary, in the very daintiest and trimmest of widows' caps, sitting at work in a little summer-house, on a fine summer afternoon, with apparently abundance of time on her hands, and quite ready to hear anything her companion had to say.

Instead of being distant, or cold, or reserved, she was more like "Little Sunshine" than ever. She chatted with him, laughed, and joked on all sorts of ordinary subjects, as easily and fluently as if they were brother and sister; as if she had no recollection whatever of his last visit and its abrupt termination, and no possible idea of his reason for calling again, and for looking so pleased when Charley went running down the avenue.

Now, this was a style of treatment for which Fitzgerald was utterly unprepared. If she had been stiff, or formal, or reserved, he had decided on a vigorous line of action which would have broken down all barriers at once. But now there were no barriers to be beaten down. The gates seemed wide open, as if there were nothing to do but to walk in.

She talked lightly, fluently, and pleasantly on every topic, and no sooner was one exhausted than she introduced another, which being pumped dry, gave way to a third of her own choosing, and so on, in a strain that seemed endless. As for suggesting a topic himself, Fitzgerald tried it again and again, but in vain. He might as well have tried to make a new stitch in the little dainty cap of purple and white which she was crocheting for the boy Charley.

Well, he thought, this can't last for ever. My turn must come. When all at once she suddenly stopped, became lost in the mysteries of crochet; and there was a dead pause. But, strange to say, the sudden silence was a greater trial to the gentleman than the flow of small talk. For the life of him he could

not break it. He could think of no one topic whatever which they had not already annihilated.

He first tried flicking one boot with his whip, and next digging the heel of the other into the sand ; but all to no purpose. This went on for a full minute, during which, without once looking up at her companion, she wickedly read all his agonies with silent enjoyment, while he sat in hopeless desperation at his unhappy fate. Then she thus set the ball rolling again :—

“Have you seen the old lady at the Manor House to-day?”

“Yes, I called as I came by, and found her much as usual, in that tremendous widow’s cap, and crape from head to foot—drowned in a flood of tears, of course.”

“And how was the old place looking?”

“Ah! there was the change. The old Squire, you see, was the life of it, and it seemed strange enough without his cheery presence, and without a sound of his jolly voice. It looked dismal enough.”

“I must go over and see the old lady some day,” she answered, “and have a look at the greenhouses. It has always been a favourite place of mine—more like another home—since the old, old days when papa was laid up there so long.”

“That was a sad time, though, Mary.”

“Yes, it was a sad time ; but I can never forget the kindness I received there from everybody. It seemed as if they could never do enough for us, though I was but a stranger. All through those long days of weary watching their kindness was incessant and unbroken.”

“I remember the days, too,” says the doctor, “and perhaps they were even longer and drearier to me than to you.”

“Were they?” she replied very slowly—“we didn’t see much of you at the Manor House, Willy. We were there some eight or ten weeks, but I don’t remember ever once seeing you throughout the whole of that time, or even hearing of you.”

“Well,” he answered rather abruptly, “I did my best to see you a score of times at least ; what on earth do you mean by saying you never heard of me?”

It was the lady’s turn to look astonished now.

“I mean what I say, my good cousin,” she replied ; “I never once heard of your even calling to ask how papa was.”

“Then I can only repeat what I just now said—that I called at the Manor House a score of times for the very express purpose of asking how the sick man and his nurse were, and was invariably met with one kind of answer—Dr. Vining was either asleep, or couldn’t be disturbed ; and Miss Vining was too busy, or too weary, to leave his room.”



"Not one such message was ever received, and no such answer ever returned by me, or with my knowledge."

"Then, Mary," he replied, "there must have been double-dealing at work somewhere, and I have been its unhappy victim. Did you think, Mary, that my love for you and the doctor was such a miserable sham as to die out the very moment you were in trouble?"

"No, Willy; I frankly tell you that I thought it far stronger and truer. I was surprised more than I can tell you, and grieved too. But whenever I asked *him*, the reply was always to this effect—'Mr. Willy Fitzgerald is too busy, I suppose, to travel as far as the Manor House, but I have sent word to his mother this morning.'"

"And you believed him, Mary? believed him at once without a word of proof?"

"What could I do but believe him? I could then suspect no motive for deceit, more than I could imagine any ground for your apparent unconcern."

So far in the dialogue Fitzgerald had controlled himself, and held his ground well; he had even gained a grain or two to his own side. But now he made a fatal move by saying fiercely—

"And so, like a woman, you condemned me at once unheard?"

"I did not know that I had ever condemned you," she answered, "or that it was usual for women specially to condemn without a hearing."

"Well, then—let bygones be bygones—what do you think *now*, Mary? You have seen and known something of me since those unhappy days; is my love all dead and worthless now? All these long years you have known that I loved you with all my heart and soul, as truly as ever man loved woman!—what do you think *now*? I must have some answer, once for all!"

"I think, Willy, that you are getting rather angry and fierce, and *demanding* what——"

"What I should have implored?" he harshly interrupted, "what I have no right to demand, you would say? But do you know, Mary, that all my life and happiness now depend on your answer to my question? that I have hoped and waited again and again for this chance of speaking, and that it has never before come?—or, rather, you have known all this as well as I did, long, long ago; and have again and again prevented and checkmated me. You know all this, and yet you wonder at my being excited and eager for an answer to my question."

"No," she replied somewhat coldly, rising up as she spoke, "I do not wonder that you are excited, or even violent, for it's your nature to be so; for that I was prepared. But I am not

prepared to be called harsh and unjust in condemning without proof, and without hearing—whatever other women may be ; and I do not choose to submit to it now.”

“There,” he cried, “unjust again ; even now you refuse to hear me—even now you treat me with scorn as hardly worth answering. But some distinct answer I must have before I go, before I decide on leaving this place for ever. Again, then, I say, Mary, I offer you most humbly the love of all these long years, the best, deepest love of my heart !”

And then he stood up, as if to oppose her leaving the summer-house.

“You stop my way, and will have an answer now? Well, then, Willy Fitzgerald, the only thing that a scornful and unjust woman can do, is to decline the honour which you offer her. From such a woman it really can matter little to a man what answer comes—and I have no other to make.”

Then she calmly took up her work, quite as calmly said “Good-morning” to him, and walked quickly away down the avenue, before he, in his amazement, could utter a word. In two minutes she had reached the house, and gone straight up to her own room, locked the door hastily, and flung herself down in an easy chair, to think over what she had done.

Her hand trembled as she laid down her crochet work on the dressing-table ; and if she had looked in the glass, she would have seen that her face was very pale, and her eyes full of sudden tears. She had foreseen this interview with Fitzgerald for many a long day, and known that sooner or later he would ask a question that demanded an answer. But she had not known that he would demand it so fiercely, or in words of anger ; neither had she known exactly what her own answer to it would be.

As for his love, she had been aware of it long before she ever saw Frank Stone ; but though she then felt pleased at his homage, it had never really touched her heart. Then had come the time of his absence in London ; then the days of her father’s illness at the Manor House, and Fitzgerald’s apparent coldness and indifference to all their trouble ; then the bitter days of wooing from a man whom she never loved, her marriage and all its miserable fruits ;—and thus all thought of her cousin’s caring for her had been gradually blotted out by the chapter of accidents.

But then came the time of her husband’s rescue from drowning by his old friend and rival ; his careful, tender watching of the sick man ; his unwearied kindness to herself in the darkest hour of her trial. All this, unconsciously to herself, had in reality touched her heart, and a seed of affection had sprung up where it

never grew before—a seed that, if only let alone to take root, might have quietly grown up into a goodly plant.

All these, and a cloud of other such thoughts passed through her mind as she sat there, silently, sadly, and alone in her room. Then came the thought, far more perplexing, did she really care for him now, in spite of all his petulance and fierce impatience? This was a question to which she returned even then no definite, distinct answer, and which my readers must answer for themselves.

But presently there came a sound of little steps up the staircase, and then a knocking against the door, which told her that Charley had found out her retreat.

“Mamma,” he cried, “I want you so much. The nursery fire went out when Jane was gone, and I have been trying to light it with a box of matches and an old doll, and some wooden soldiers. But it won’t burn up.”

Then she opened the door, and went down into the nursery with her boy, and worked at crochet for two hours, and was very silent.

Meanwhile Fitzgerald sat still in dreary meditation in the summer-house, conscious that he had thrown away his best chance, feeling his case to be hopeless, yet unwilling to give it up without seeing Mary again. At last, however, he wisely decided that another interview, even if practicable, would be of no use, made his way to the stable, saddled his own horse, and rode wearily home.

He had no need to tell the doctor what had happened; nor did he. Nothing was said on the subject until the next day, when he simply remarked, after dinner—

“Doctor, I’m going into Sandymouth to-morrow morning to ask Macgregor to take my place here with you for a month. He’s a good fellow, his practice is very small, easily managed with this, and I can afford to pay him well. I shall take a run up to town, and stay for a time until I decide on what to do.”

Then the doctor knew what had happened; and knew also too well that all remonstrance would but hasten Fitzgerald’s departure; and, therefore, he wisely held his tongue, though he felt the threatened loss of his partner more than he cared to tell.

On the following Monday, Willy Fitzgerald caught the express train at Exeter, and that night was in his old lodgings in Trinity Square, Borough, having written to Mrs. Borlase some days before to secure them.

“I will try,” he said resolutely to himself, “what a month’s change of scene will do, and be an idle man about town.”

How he spent the month there is no need to chronicle here,



even if we had space to do so. All that can be done is to note the one event upon which the little thread of our story hangs. He had never tried being an idle man in town, or elsewhere, and he soon found out that it was a much harder and drearier task than he had imagined.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

“A good day’s work is measured by its fruits;  
Not merely by the hours in labour spent.”

CARSTAIRS.

FITZGERALD had been gone a fortnight, Mr. Macgregor had taken his place, and to the old doctor’s utter abhorrence managed to tread on the corns of most of his patients who suffered from tight boots either bodily or mental. He was a little, bumptious, ferrety, red-haired man, marked with the small-pox, who talked fast, and loudly, and thought himself Sir Astley Cooper and Abernethy condensed into one smart young doctor, and improved by all the light of modern science, though he was in reality as shallow and ignorant as he was conceited.

Between him and Dr. Vining, therefore, there was little or no sympathy, especially after his saying one morning at breakfast:—

“You’ve got the queerest set o’ patients, doctor, in these parts, that ever I came across. They seem to fancy that their complaints are such as were never before heard of under the sun, and that nobody can cure them but Doctor Vining, unless it’s Fitzgerald; or nobody but Doctor Fitzgerald, unless it’s Vining. By St. Patrick, doctor, their ignorance is beyond belief.”

“Is it?” replied the old man, quietly; “I’m sorry for that, for I have known even *their* ignorance exceeded—and in these enlightened days, too.”

There the dialogue suddenly ended, by mutual consent, and each man started off for his day’s work, not to meet again until dinner-time. But neither the dinner on that day, nor on any succeeding day, was a whit more cordial than the breakfast; and the old man had a weary time of it—a time which left him both worn and broken in spirits and in health, himself; and anxious about the practice, which, he really feared, this donkey of a Sandymouth doctor was gradually undermining. And worst of all, he had nobody to whom he could complain of his troubles. Fitzgerald, besides being as hard as a nether mill-stone, was out of reach. And his own daughter?—well, she wasn’t likely to sympathise much with the trouble of which she was the indirect

cause. Still, to whom else could he go but to Mary? (as he said to himself,) and to her he accordingly went when his day's work next took him that way.

He had not seen her since Fitzgerald went away, and the meeting between father and daughter was unusually cordial.

"As for that boy Charley, Mary," said the doctor, "he grows bigger and bigger every time I see him; bigger and more mischievous. It does me good to look at him."

"Does it, papa? Then why don't you come and see him oftener?"

"Why don't I come? Because I'm never asked, my dear—that's why. Here have I been left alone for this last fortnight, or more—ever since Fitzgerald went to London—consigned to the tender mercies of a little, peck-marked Scotchman; a fellow with red air—a prize medal fellow from some German university, I believe—and my daughter at the Farm has never once dropped in to see whether I was dead or alive."

"O papa! papa! the idea of your waiting to be asked to come to see me. And Mr. Fitzgerald gone——"

"Mr. Fitzgerald? who is he? *Doctor*, or *Willy*, if you mean him. You know that he's gone!"

"Well, then, *Willy* Fitzgerald; how should I know that he is gone?"

"O, my dear, I thought that you might have known it; that he might have told you himself, as he was here only a day or two before he left. But, however, he *is* gone—gone to London for a month, so he says, to see what is to be seen in the great city, and to enquire for what suitable work is to be found there. As for Langford and Sandymouth, he seems to have suddenly taken an aversion to the whole place, and has sent out from the town a detestable Scotch fellow, named Norrington Macgregor, who is quietly ruining the practice, and wearing my life out of me into the bargain."

"Oh! I am so sorry, papa; so sorry. What can I do to help you? Can't you get rid of the Scotchman and find a better man?"

"No, no, child; the difficulty just now is to find any man, even half qualified, to do another man's work. Every fellow worth his salt has his own practice to look after, and *that* he cannot neglect. But, after all, my dear, it isn't much matter. I'm getting old and worn out, at last, that's a fact. I can't last long now, so that I shall not trouble anybody much more, my——"

But this was more than Mary could stand.

"You are a very bad, cruel old man," she cried; "that is what you are, to come over here again on purpose to worry me."

How dare you talk about getting old, and dying, and not troubling people any more, when you know that you are no trouble to any living soul, but a joy and a comfort to a great many people; and to Charley and me the only comfort we have got left?"

At this moment the dinner-bell rang, and Mary, taking the old man's arm in her most loving fashion, and bidding Charley take his other hand, led him down to dinner. Having once got him downstairs, and into his favourite arm-chair near the window, she plied him carefully with the choicest morsels of meat, and the choicest glass of sherry she could lay hands on; but above all with the tenderest and most loving words that a loving heart, touched with the faintest shadow of remorse, could suggest.

By degrees, the cunning old doctor grew mollified; he praised the juicy hare, and praised the golden sherry; he told stories to young Charley, and chatted gaily with Charley's mother, as if every thought of trouble had been obliterated. To Norrington Macgregor, and to Fitzgerald, or any one of his own numerous miseries, he never once more alluded; but after a cozy dessert, and a still cozier chat on all sorts of pleasant topics, he got into his chaise at the gate, as full of life, and spirit, and fun, as any young bachelor that side of Exeter.

"I think you're better, papa, for your dinner."

"Yes, my dear, I am; your dinners always do me good."

"Come to me again, then, soon; when you want to be cured of the dyspepsias, come and see Charley; and if that horrid Scotchman bullies you, send him out here to me; I will talk to him, and soon bring him to his senses."

As Dr. Vining drove up that night to his own door, he said—"A very good day's work. Very good."

Then he went into his own private sanctum, and smoked the pipe of peace.

But before he went to bed that night, he wrote a short note to Fitzgerald, at the end of which—after telling him of all his troubles in a very lachrymose style—came the following paragraph:

"The fact is, Fitzgerald, that without you I am like a fish out of water. I can't do my work, and that fellow Macgregor is steadily ruining the practice. The old ladies in the almshouses are in despair, and threaten to put on crape if you don't come soon; your mortar patient gets worse every day; the mother of the twins has taken to having fits; the Vicar swears he has had gout or rheumatism ever since you left, and that the sight of that Scotchman has given him a skin disease. For God's sake think better of it, and come back to your old friend.

"Ever yours,  
"R. V."



“P.S.—I was at the Manor Farm to-day. Mary is well, and as charming as ever; but thunderstruck to hear of your having really gone. O that you would but give her time.”

To which, in a day or two, came a very short reply, which ended thus:—“It grieves me to find you miss me so much. Get rid of Macgregor at once, and have a better man out from Sandy-mouth; or I will send you one from Guy’s. Only one thing will bring me back to Langford: a single word—*Come*—and *she* must say it.”

## THE BRITISH RABBI.

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WHAT is a Rabbi? Where does he come from? How is he made?

These and a dozen other questions may suggest themselves to any one who reflects that there are some 60,000 Jews living in Great Britain, who, if they are only faithful to the instincts of their race, "will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you."\*

Whether it is fair to measure any body of men by the intellectual height attained by its ministers, is more than we should like to decide off-hand. The utmost that we presume to suggest is, that if such a standard may lawfully be applied to the ordinary run of Jewish congregations, the result will not be edifying. Leaving London out of the calculation, as enjoying the pick of Hebrew talent, and taking an average-sized town in the provinces, it may be broadly said without injustice that the synagogue functionaries rank lower in scholarship and general knowledge than six out of every ten of other ministers within the district.

How is this to be accounted for? Mainly as follows:—In most Christian congregations the minister is compelled to go through a course of preliminary training—in no case, perhaps, very deep or exhaustive—but sufficient to enable him to discharge his duties with decency. He may not be particularly brilliant, or wise, or well-bred. He may, indeed, be a dull and conceited upstart, but the chances are that he has acquired a tight hold upon the distinctive tenets of the community amongst whom he is now about to act as leader. His teaching, such as it is, will reflect the peculiarities of his party, and so long as he can continue to keep a little ahead of his listeners, he may command approval, and, what is more to the purpose, a competence.

The Jewish minister, on the other hand, comes to his office without any training whatever, and, as he is seldom or never called upon to preach, there is little scope for the exercise of any talent, except the faculty of keeping himself straight with his congrega-

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\* Merchant of Venice, Act 1, Scene iii.

tion, and making two ends of a very narrow income meet. Provided he can get through his Hebrew prayer-book without stumbling, he may lay aside all kinds of learning as a needless encumbrance. But stay ! there is one thing that he must be able to do—and all the better for him if he can do it well—he must know the old Rabbinical tones and cadences to which the prayers are sung, and if he can give them out with a deep mellow voice, let him rest assured that he brings with him the highest qualification which his people are likely to demand. It matters little in their eyes whether he understands the liturgy which he is chanting, but it matters a great deal whether he can chant it well.

Is this, then, the Rabbi of whom we are in search ? No, not exactly. He is perhaps the nearest approach to him that we are likely to find ; but it is as well to understand at once that the Rabbi of a fervid imagination, clad in long flowing robes, and marked off from his fellow-men by a reputation for unworldliness and learning, has long since passed away from British soil. He lingers yet, indeed, in remote continental districts, where he cleaves with pertinacious fidelity to the garments and usages of his race. But in England the very name of Rabbi has almost passed into disuse. "Reader" or "Minister" are now the favourite terms. No preference either is given to applicants for office who claim to come of the tribe of Levi, or who count their descent from Aaron. The idea of priesthood has faded away as completely as the gorgeous temple within the walls of which its rites were wont to be celebrated. Nay more ; the bare fact that a man is known to be of Aaronic lineage (a Cohen) will often stand in the way of his selection, on account of his being unable to perform certain duties towards the dead without fear of a life-long pollution. Other things being equal, therefore, the son of Aaron must needs give place to one who boasts not of coming from the hallowed line.

But what makes a "Reader?" The will of the congregation, and nothing more. A vacancy occurs, which is duly advertised in the Jewish press. The salary offered usually ranges between £40 and £200 a year. It is not a very tempting bait, especially as there is no likelihood of things growing better, but it is alluring enough to draw out half-a-dozen candidates, and among them our friend Jacob Solomon, who is not prospering to his heart's content in the watch-making line of business. He thinks that he would like to settle down snugly in "the Synagogue House," and write "reverend" on his card. So he sends in his application, and backs it up with such interest as his friends are able to command. The election rests with the seat-holders of the congregation, and a committee of five or six is usually chosen to decide be-



tween competitors. If Jacob has a good voice, and is not suspected of being otherwise than a reputable liver—a point upon which, to do the electors justice, they are exceedingly particular—he gets the post, subject to a three months' notice on either side. At the end of this time, if the congregation are tired of him, and if watch-making prospects are "looking up," he may drop the reverend and open shop again. There is nothing more durable than the three months' notice to bind him either to the congregation which has chosen him, or to the office upon which he now enters. He receives no kind of ordination, nor does he even hold a license. He will probably think it necessary to start a white tie in acknowledgment of his clerical character, and during his synagogue ministrations he will also array himself in a black Geneva gown and bands provided by the congregation. But the hat is that which after all, perhaps, is supposed to convey the highest title to respect, and upon which, therefore, the greatest care is lavished. This is also the gift of the synagogue, and besides being turned up at the sides, is decorated in front with a rosette as big as a five-shilling piece. When, in addition, the "Reader" adorns himself on Sabbaths with a straight-cut coat, he may very well pass for a colonial archdeacon of Puseyite tendencies.

But by far the most important part of the synagogue arrangements has yet to be described. Besides having souls to be prayed for, Jews have likewise bellies to be filled. Anybody, as has been seen, may aspire to the former duty, but the latter can be attempted only by a qualified and licensed official. He is known as "the killer." It is not a pretty title, to be sure, as written down in English, but in Hebrew it sounds much better, and, whether in English or Hebrew, expresses an office of great trust and consideration. Whether your Jew might make shift to do without his "reader," we will not be ill-natured enough so much as to guess, but that he cannot get on without his "killer" is as certain as that he cannot live without food. He must of course eat and drink, and as a matter of equal necessity he must have somebody to determine what is eatable and drinkable. This is the duty of "the killer." To him pertains the responsibility of deciding between "Cosher" and "Trefa." These are terms of almost magical power. Speak of "Trefa" to the veriest rascal who never goes near his synagogue, except on the Day of Atonement, and he will recoil with instinctive horror, for it is meat which may not lawfully be eaten by any Israelite who hopes to be saved. Not that it is necessarily pork, or any such abomination. It is simply meat that has not been properly killed and examined. "Cosher," on the other hand, is meat which may be eaten with a clear conscience. To settle which is which, is the duty of "the killer."

To enable him to do this with certainty, he has to pass through a course of careful training. In the first place, he must master all the Rabbinical laws which relate to the killing of animals and fowls, and which describe with an inexhaustible minuteness the various specks and flaws which, over and above the actual Levitical prohibitions, constitute uncleanness. He must, therefore, not only know all the parts of an animal with the accuracy of a butcher, but must be able to pronounce upon the healthiness of each organ with the certainty of a surgeon. The animal may be fat and well, it may be a model of symmetry, and may have borne away a prize from the Smithfield Cattle Show, but if the Jewish "killer" can detect the smallest blemish in any of the internal parts, be it even the suspicion of disease in liver, heart, intestines or lungs, the carcase is laid aside as unclean. Christians may eat it and welcome, but it must not be thought of for Israelitish tables.

Even when the town can boast a Jewish butcher of its own, not a head of cattle can be slaughtered on his premises except by the authorised "killer" of the synagogue. This official must attend in person, and having recited a specified form of prayer, he proceeds to cut the animal's throat. The Rabbinical requirements about the sharpness of the knife are very precise—the object being to kill instantly, and to draw out all the blood. The length and breadth are both laid down, while the presence of the tiniest notch upon the edge, or the lightest scratch upon the blade, would make it unfit for use. The wound with which the animal is dispatched must be of a specified length. An inch more or less would convert the most irreproachable carcase into "Trefa." The same applies to poultry, which must be killed with like scrupulous attention to exactness.

The next duty of "the killer" is to search the animal, in order to ascertain if there is any internal sign of defect or disease. That this is no mere empty form, may be gathered from inquiries made of a butcher who supplies almost the whole Jewish population of a large provincial town. As many as twenty sheep are often refused in succession—this was his testimony—before one is allowed to pass. Of course he made merry at what he called "the queer vagaries" of "the killer;" but it was plain to see that this synagogue official was not easily put off with doubtful meat. "Not that the carcasses are ever really diseased," our informant went on apologetically to explain, "but the synagogue people have got such precious rum notions as to what is what. They just as often refuse what I consider the best beasts as not." This, most likely, is true enough, seeing that "the killer" is guided by rules drawn up in Syria some hundreds of years before Chris-

tianity, to which he must blindly adhere, even though all the breeders and butchers in England were with one voice to declare them stupid and effete. Come what will, "the killer" is bound to follow his text-book with as much persevering constancy, as if it were the sagest product of modern science. So if the animal does not come up to the Talmudical notion of what a beast ought to be, he straightway rejects it, and goes on to another. When he comes to a "Cosher" animal—one, that is, which is not only clean according to Levitical ordinance, but which has been killed in the prescribed manner, and has been searched and found faultless—he sets his private mark upon the carcass. This is afterwards cut up by the butcher, and "the killer" makes his appearance again, and stamps each joint as "Cosher." Thence it passes to the shop, and is retailed to the faithful, with a tax upon it which sometimes reaches twopence a pound beyond market price—an impost which the butcher is afterwards compelled to refund to the synagogue.

"The killer" must be provided with a license, which is obtained as follows:—After having studied the Talmudical Laws which relate to the slaughter of animals and fowls, he must go up to London and serve for three months under the six killers who are appointed to supply the metropolitan (Jewish) market. If he makes satisfactory progress, a favourable report is forwarded to the Chief Rabbi, who bids the aspirant for office attend before him, and answer such questions as to the Rabbinical Laws and precedents as he and his assistants may think fit to propose. Supposing that the answers are satisfactory, and that the candidate's character will bear inspection, a license is granted under the Chief Rabbi's hand, and the person whose name is mentioned in it may offer himself for the post of "killer" to any synagogue within the British Dominions. The Chief Rabbi's certificate is the test of his fitness; but even when this has been granted, he must attend before him once in every three years, to be examined afresh, and to prove that his skill and knowledge are neither of them impaired.

The office of "killer," it will be seen, is in theory quite distinct from that of "reader,"—but in practice they are often discharged by the same person. This, of course, is done from motives of economy. A "killer" there *must* be in every congregation, whether the members like it or not—but the "reader" is optional. They may, if they are so minded, sink his office in that of the "killer," and, truth to tell, the amalgamation is often enough made to become the rule. Thus, then, setting down the Jewish congregations in Great Britain as at about thirty-six, there would be at least five-and-twenty of these places where there



would be only *one* synagogue functionary—and he, of course, would be “the killer”—or, rather, he would be “killer” and “reader” combined. An official of this class occupies a very different position towards his congregation from the ordinary “reader.” His education—except in the matter of slaughtering and searching—may stand on the same low level. He may have worked at a trade before his election, and may return to it again whenever he ceases to hold office; but he has this advantage over his coadjutor in synagogue duties, that his license can only be revoked by the hand that gave it, and that thus far he is independent of the caprices of his congregation. Not that this really amounts to much after all, for if the synagogue cuts off supplies, it would be idle for the Chief Rabbi to force his services upon an unwilling community.

In some favoured cases certificates for the slaughter of poultry are given to private individuals, but they are sparingly granted, and in no case extend beyond the family requirements of the particular Jew who may be deemed worthy of the privilege. Israelites who are going on a long ocean voyage often receive the same license.

The great moving power amongst all the Jews within the British dominions is the Chief Rabbi of England. His jurisdiction is enormous, for it extends over every corner of the earth which acknowledges the English flag. Canada, India, China, Australia, New Zealand, and the West Indian Islands are all included in his rule. Nor is this a mere formal supremacy. Very far from it. Not a marriage can take place in one of these countries without at least a guinea fee being sent home to the chief pastor of the Hebrew church—not a beast or fowl can be slaughtered for Jewish consumption in the most distant outpost of civilization unless a license has been first obtained from London. And not even when once granted is this colonial certificate perpetual; once in every three years must the holder present himself before some one who is appointed by the central British authority to re-examine him and to report upon his efficiency. So that the office of Chief Rabbi of England stands for a power which causes itself to be felt even to the uttermost boundaries of the earth.

Great care, of course, is exercised in his selection. He must be a man of learning and ability, and, what is quite as much to the purpose, he must have undeniable friends in influential quarters. Small use will it be for him to aspire to the Supreme Rabbinical honours unless he can count amongst his backers some of the monetary giants who rule the financial fortunes of the world. His selection rests with “The Great Synagogue,” in Duke’s Place, but every synagogue which is protected by the British flag

sends in its vote. Thus, then, supposing that there are four candidates in the field, the names are sent round to each congregation in England and the Colonies. Meanwhile, the friends of each candidate are busily employed in pushing their claims. The members of each synagogue meet for discussion, and the names are submitted to them. The one who carries most votes is returned to London as the chosen candidate of that particular synagogue, and so on with the rest. When the votes have been gathered together from all the corners of the earth a balance is struck, and the candidate who can claim the majority is at once hailed as Chief Rabbi.

Space will not allow of considering the position of foreign Rabbis. Enough to say that in most continental countries the Chief Rabbi must be appointed by Government, and that he must be able to write a University degree after his name. The ministers of each congregation within his district are elected by him, and hold his license. The exceptions to the rule are Russia and part of Poland, where the Government declines to recognise the Chief Rabbi, and where, in consequence, the people choose their own minister. But even here the custom differs very widely from the English rule. While in this country the successful candidate for ministerial duties may be, and probably is, as ignorant as a travelling pedlar, in Poland and Galicia he must be known to possess Talmudical learning. Then again, while in England no preference is given to candidates who come from what may be termed a clerical family, in strict continental countries the exact opposite prevails, and no one could hope to make good his claims to the name of Rabbi unless he could count his descent from a line of men who had been Rabbis before him.

## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

## CHAPTER V.

PROMPTER, please to ring up the curtain.

The snuggest of snug rooms. Not at all like an apartment on the stage. Not gaunt, not pretentious, not draughty, not smeared over with a hideous figured paper, not running into all sorts of queer angles, not hung with infamous oil paintings in glaring frames, not smudged here and there with Dutch metal, not surmounted by strips of flapping canvas, not containing crimson and gold furniture on a carpetless floor, not commanding a glorious view of the Thames and Waterloo shot-tower by moonlight, not opening on to a terrace and spacious gardens, not looking as if the walls would tumble to pieces if meddled with, not on the banks of the river near Twickenham, not in a poor street on the Surrey side of the river, but at the very top of one of those grim old houses that look down frowningly on that Paradise of smoke-coloured foliage and dusty sparrows—the ancient and melancholy gardens of Gray's Inn.

Not a handsome room by any means, but for all that excessively comfortable.

Oh dear me, what a bad hand I am at a description. But don't you agree with me that a long catalogue of details seldom gives you a better notion of the general appearance of a place than can be got from carefully reading over the several items of an upholsterer's bill?

A blazing fire to begin with.

I hope you will not read this in hot weather.

Pull to the curtains, fling yourself down on a sofa that there is no resisting, and distribute chairs, tables, rugs, cushions, bookshelves, pictures, and so forth, as pleaseth you best. Don't overdo the thing, though. Don't sacrifice comfort to elegance, or you will be wide of the mark. Above all, don't try to be genteel; don't try to create an effect. Let everything be of the best, but nothing painfully ornamental. Let there be plenty of warmth in the room—warmth of atmosphere, warmth of colour. Don't let anything be bran-new or shiny, or smelling of varnish, and let



nothing be threadbare or rickety. Let the big arm-chair by the fire be a very paradise of repose. Let—but surely, if you know what comfort means, you will be able to furnish the room without additional hints, whereas if you be one of those people who go in for smugness and propriety, and for having everything in its right place, and books laid out in geometrical patterns and gleaming rosewood and mahogany, and stiff angular furniture coming out all over into a cold perspiration of beads, and great gaudy screens, and spotless fireirons, and candlesticks with lustres innumerable—if, in fact, you be one of those persons who never by any chance rub their heads against the back of their chairs, who carefully wipe their feet on the mat before entering the room, who would incur any discomfort rather than disarrange the anti-macassars on the sofa, who wrap up their picture frames in yellow gauze, who are afraid of turning the gas on for fear it should blacken the ceiling, who never *throw* but only *place* a few lumps of coal on the bars—no, certainly not fire—lest there should be waste, and dust should be caused, I might possess and employ for your benefit all the eloquence of Demosthenes, and my words would only be as “sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.”

It was the miserable evening of a miserable day. For hours past great loose clouds had been rolling up from westward, and the sky seemed to be covering itself over with crape, and to be pulling its mourning together in sad memory of the splendid summer weather that we had been enjoying unbroken for weeks.

The roads, scorched out of all patience, had mounted towards heaven in one great angry protesting column of dust, the leaves on the trees had curled themselves up till they looked like scraps of brown paper, and sparks from engines were setting railway embankments and commons on fire. London had become unbearable to all but business people—a race of Salamanders who would dig for gold in the seven times heated furnace of Nebuchadnezzar—an extra penny was being charged for ice at the restaurants, and every paper contained its monody on some wretched labourer or foolish schoolboy, who had ventured out into the blaze of the mid-day sun, and had paid the penalty of his rashness with a brain fever or his life.

It was the most prosperous season Cremorne had ever known, but the Crystal Palace Gardens had been quite deserted since the day of the first flower show. This, however, by the way.

Within twenty-four hours a great change took place. The sun went in, the blue sky turned a cold, slaty grey, the heat grew so oppressive that you gasped in breathing. Then an angry murmur was heard in the distance, as if a countless multitude had risen in rebellion and were marching steadily on to a sure and

awful victory. The sullen growl came nearer and nearer, till at last it had increased to a terrible roar. Then a chill, sweeping wind was felt hurrying up, and the dried leaves on the boughs rattled, and leapt down, and fled terror-stricken before it. The trees bowed, and the branches tossed themselves to and fro, and struggled as if they had gone mad. The heavens turned black with rage, then there was a tremendous crash overhead as if all the artillery in the world had gone off at once, and at the signal the rain dashed down from the misty heights above in a torrent.

The summer was gone; the stormy weather had set in, and having once begun to rain it rained incessantly for a fortnight. We forgot all about the brown fields and the blazing furze; we shivered and set light to our fires.

At length, one gloomy evening, after it had been pouring all day, the floodgates suddenly closed, and the heavens ceased their lamentation, though the face of the sky was as black and frowning as ever. A cold, hungry wind came roaring up through the streets, and before nightfall the pavements were licked as clean and white as a bleached bone. You looked out and saw nothing but the monotonous clouds overhead, and the black fronts of the opposite houses, and the gaslights flickering as if all the courage had been bullied out of them, and the rich, oily mud in the roadway.

Every now and then, however, some unlucky policeman would pass—a hapless mortal whose duty forced him to go tramping up and down, backwards and forwards, from right to left, from left to right, at the regulation pace, in the regulation attitude, despite wind, despite rain, despite fatigue, despite ill-humour, despite, perhaps, a sick wife and a couple of children lying a-bed at home stricken with fever, with no better companions to cheer his solitude than a heavy heart, an empty stomach—oh, yes, there are such beings as policemen who have not the run of a kitchen—a dark lantern, and that sense of forlornness peculiar to great cities, in which a man walks for hours by himself separated by a narrow wall from thousands of fellow-men with no one of whom has he a single thought in common.

It was just a quarter past nine, and the guardian of public safety had turned the corner of the next street, when there came a rap at the door.

It was the last post, and a letter from—I did not recognize the handwriting at first, but directly I opened the envelope I found to my astonishment that of all people in the world it was from Dick.

He had found me out before I had had time, or at least a favourable opportunity, to look him up as I had intended to do at

his office. But, as I think I have observed already, I am a terribly lazy fellow.

The letter was a model of brevity, and of warmth too.

Dick could be energetic though he was never gushing.

The dear old chap asked me to come over if I could and meet him at his lodgings about six o'clock the following evening.

Next morning it was raining in torrents, and so it continued all day, but I was not to be done, and by the time appointed I was at Gray's Inn.

I tried to give you some faint notion of Dick's quarters at the beginning of the chapter.

No, no, my friend, you made a mistake when you fancied that it was my own lodgings that I was describing. But I confess I ought to have been more explicit.

The idea, by-the-bye, of my writing in chapters! I who have always detested literary work of any kind; but the plan has its conveniences, and having a dull piece of taskwork to get through, I think I am entitled to screw as much amusement for myself out of it as I can.

And now, with many apologies to the reader, I will continue.

I found poor Dick looking pale, anxious, and overworked. I had not seen him for more than a year; not since I had been down in ——shire, and we shook hands heartily.

I set to work to cross-examine him. What had he been doing since we last met?

I am not inquisitive—at least not very so—but Dick is as fond of a gossip as I am, and really I don't think we ever had many secrets from each other.

I must own I was very curious to know why he had entered a Government office.

"It is about the last thing I should ever have expected of you," I said. "I thought you were an ambitious fellow, and meant to make a dash at fame and fortune."

"I don't know why you should have thought so," he answered. "I never did much at Harton, and the people at home always talked of me as a fool. But I will grant I hoped for something better than I have got at present, though my path has been of my own choosing. I know very well," he presently added, "that there is neither money to be earned nor credit to be gained, at least in *my* branch of the business, but anything is better than lying on your oars. I have the consolation of knowing that I have made a start for myself, and at all events I have time to look about me and to watch my opportunity."

"But surely," I interposed, "your family had something to do with your getting the appointment."



"Oh dear no," he answered; "nothing at all. They had not even a suspicion of my plans till one day a letter arrived calling me up to London to pass my examination. Sir George Fotheringay was a connection of my mother's, and no particular friend of Sir Francis. I called upon him one afternoon last November twelvemonth, told him exactly how affairs stood at Culverton, and he promised, kindly enough, to get me into the office on the first vacancy. I wanted to have as little help from home at starting as possible, and I have succeeded in my object."

I looked at Dick, and I suppose my face betrayed my thoughts.

"Yes," he said, "you have guessed it. There have been family jars and so forth. You recollect my telling you some time ago that things at Culverton were not going quite as I could wish?"

I nodded.

"Well," he continued, "since then we have come to something very like an explosion. I daresay I have been to blame. I am not over-gifted with patience, and if I had known how to diplomatize, or to knock under, or to humour the governor, I might in course of time have got all that I wanted. But I am not a tactician, and I lost my temper. I daresay you won't think any the better of me for what I am going to tell you; indeed, I don't for an instant mean to say that I have not been a good deal if not altogether in the wrong, but when you have heard everything, I think you will admit that I have had provocation."

He got up, took a few restless turns across the room, then determinedly threw himself back into his chair, and proceeded as follows:—

"It seems, though I only found it out lately, that Sir Francis made up his mind years ago that Harry should be the gentleman and I the scholar of the family.

"Why won't people speak out? A word or two in season might have prevented all the mischief. How was I to know what my father wished? He never said anything. The merest hint in the world—a smile or a frown—would have been enough for me, for I was really anxious to please him; but he kept silence, never moved a muscle of his face, and I had to begin work in the dark.

"I was packed off to school when I was not quite eight years old, and before I went home for my first holidays I had won a prize. I had worked hard for it I can tell you, and I was as proud as a peacock. My father had never seemed to notice me much, but now I could fancy him smiling and congratulating me, and shaking me by the hand. Dr. Baring had done as much, and he was a stern, exacting master, whom it was almost impossible to

satisfy ; surely, then, my father whom I loved and who loved me would do even more.

“ I sat down in a quiet corner and thought over all the difficulties I had conquered, all the discouragements that I could laugh at now, though once they had filled me with dismay. I remembered how fellows had jeered at me and told me that I was a conceited little jackanapes to try for the prize at all. I thought of long, hot, sunshiny afternoons spent in a dull, quiet room, with a ticking clock frowning at me from the mantelpiece, and a dogs-eared Latin Grammar lying on that well-known table with the green baize cover.

“ I used to look at that monotonous cloth—to some people suggestive only of billiards or a naughtier game—and when I was tired and sleepy from over-work, it always made me think of the fields. I used to wander away in imagination till I could almost fancy that I was lying amongst the bright green grass and waving flowers, that the gnats were humming in the air, that the birds were singing softly and tremulously above me, and that the evening breeze was murmuring through the hedgerows. Then I used to forget all about Syntax and Prosody, and could imagine that the soft twilight was creeping over the sweet-smelling fields, that one kind star was rising in the heavens—the star that I was so fond of—the star that always came out before any of the others and seemed to think nothing of itself and to be only too glad to be of some use to the great lazy world that was falling to sleep under its loving watchful eye. I used half to believe that it was the angel of a little sister whom I had known once, but who left us suddenly in answer to a whisper from God, and whom I could picture to myself in yet another form, lying happy, tranquil, contented in the bosom of those gorgeous cloud-valleys that spread themselves in the path of the setting sun.

“ I lay curled up in my quiet corner, and thought of hopes and fears now settled for ever, dismal misgivings, thrilling anticipations of a coming triumph, hours when it was impossible to learn try as I would, hard work in school and out of school, sleep broken by anxiety, minutes stolen from the early morning when I bent resolutely to my task only to drop back a moment later into the land of Nod. I thought of the months I had given to drudgery, and when I sat down to write my letter home announcing my victory, I must admit that I felt that I had done something to be proud of.

“ In a day or two arrived a hurried note from my father, telling me I had done my duty, and that he hoped I should always try to be a credit to the family.

“ I was sadly disappointed.

“So he thought nothing of my success ; he took it as a matter of course, and only hinted that he would have been annoyed had I failed. If he had only known how I had struggled, if he had only known how sure everyone felt that I should break down. It was mortifying to see all my hard work ignored, merely to be complimented in a few cold words on my ‘cleverness,’ to find that I had only escaped giving displeasure, to know that in future I had no warm congratulations to expect, no sympathy or words of comfort to anticipate in case of defeat, that news of a hard-won fight would be received only with a formal expression of approval.

“When I went home I found that my father seemed to have forgotten all about me. He did not even ask to see my prize. My aunt Mary, who at the time was keeping house for him, whispered to me that he was very much pleased, but I should never have guessed so from his looks. I tried hard for a while to think that he was a man who kept his feelings to himself, but in my heart I believed then as I believe now that all recollection of my success had passed from his mind.

“I saw that I had merely done what had been expected of me, and that if I resolved to work in the future as I had worked in the past, I should be doing so merely to please myself, and to earn the not very hearty compliments of my aunt Mary.

“My father’s sister, I must tell you, was not the sort of person to trouble herself much about school victories or defeats. She was not a highly educated woman, she was not ambitious, she had always lived in society and had an undisguised contempt for academical honours. She was clever—smart the Yankees would have said—but without depth ; she could not go to the heart of a subject ; she was not a woman to look curiously or very anxiously into the future. Never having made any great exertions herself, she was unable to realize the idea of hard work in others ; she had very little sympathy with industry, which she regarded as a plebeian qualification ; the mere act of glancing at a book an hour of lazy occupation, an occasional five minutes spent in coquetting with a task, being the only notion *she* could form of persistent brain labour.

“She had an intense faith in the power of unaided natural abilities, she fancied that every one who succeeded did so by mere dint of uncultivated genius and good fortune, and that those who were baffled at the first or second onset had received conclusive proof that victory was not for *them*, and that it was their duty forthwith to retire from the struggle.

“My aunt could never have been accused of being too much in earnest, she had no hobby, no theories, no peculiar views, no high-flown aspirations. She had a contempt for the serious and



exact, said that reasoning was objectionable, as it sometimes led to discussions, that it was excessively vulgar to contradict people, and that logic was quite out of place except in books. The doctrine of self-help she treated with a smile of derision. To have laughed it to scorn would have been an act too demonstrative for such an admirer, as she was, of fashionable stoicism. She had no faith in the advantages of high mental culture, she shuddered at the notion of a book-worm, she had never found, so she told me, that Hebrew or geology were of the slightest use to a man in a ball-room or at the dinner-table, she begged me to remember that over-earnestness and excitement, especially in society, did not become a gentleman. People of real position, she added, always put a restraint upon themselves, and were never peculiar.

"I am afraid my aunt was rather addicted to sneering. She was readier to find fault than to adopt any creed in the main good, for better or worse. In criticising a picture, fine as a whole, if somewhat faulty in detail, she would pick out the weak points, whilst others were simply impressed by the general effect; as for the difficulties overcome, the ten thousand merits that could be set off against the half-dozen short-comings, these never entered into her consideration.

"She had a dangerous knack of discovering in a moment the absurd side even of things holy. Nothing was sacred from her sneer. She had no depth of faith in the grand, noble, or lovely. She was beset with fantastic doubts that she could not help expressing, and which, when taking the form of words, were occasionally irreverent, and often amusing. To raise a smile, to divert serious thoughts into a grotesque or ludicrous channel, was with her a temptation usually too strong to be resisted. She had never seen life in earnest, and she had no sympathy with emotions that she believed to be merely part of the stock in trade of novelists, or to be assumed with an interested object. She always maintained that people who professed to admire art in its loftier branches, or to set before themselves an *ideal* of life, were merely acting. She had a mischievous joy in running counter to received opinions, in administering a gentle shock to deeply-rooted prejudices, in treading on moral corns. The profound and impassioned either bored her or made her laugh. She was fastidious, but impatient. She could excuse lack of power, but not want of grace. She believed herself a critic, but probably she was only flippant and without faith. A *gaucherie*, an error of taste, thrilled her painfully, but her refinement was of that superficial, or merely apparent kind which a woman always acquires by moving for years together in a rank of life where feelings are regulated by clock-work.

“Aunt Mary was amiable, and could be entertaining, and even under some circumstances was disposed to make sacrifices, but as a rule she had no notion of rendering inclination subservient to *duty*—a word she said she detested—neither had she any idea of habitually sacrificing, when necessary, present pleasure out of regard for future consequences. I always liked my aunt, and yet there was no real confidence between us. She was good-natured and amusing, with a certain shrewdness mixed with her frivolity, that made it pleasant to talk to her, and yet I should no more have dreamt of opening my heart to her, of appealing to her for advice, of courting her sympathy in trouble, than I should of making a confidant of the first stranger I might meet in the street.

“The silence and neglect of my father had helped to discourage me, but the lukewarm recommendations of my aunt, her peculiar habit of taking at the same time both sides of a question, of openly expressing one view of the case and of insinuating another altogether different, the way too she had of treating with ill-disguised contempt much that I had hitherto believed in implicitly, helped to dishearten me, and to put me out of conceit with what I had done more completely still.

“My father might, for aught I knew, have faith in the utility of my work; my aunt spoke as if to get on well at school were simply an item of family politeness that no gentleman would shirk, but which he had a perfect right to sneer and grumble at in private; as if study were a mere barren matter of form, more or less respectable because old fashioned, but not worthy to enlist the *serious* attention of anyone who hoped one day to mix in society. When I began to lose heart, and, on my return to school, let opportunity after opportunity slip by, she took me to task in a mild, passionless way, simply, I suppose, because my father had hinted that I should be the better for a lecture. Though deeply interested in my progress, and now much disappointed, he never let a word of censure escape him personally. He held his tongue, knowing that he had not the gift of persuasion. What I thought neglect may after all have been merely a kind of diffidence, a shrinking from an unpleasant duty, perhaps a reluctance to inflict pain. He knew that if I were to prove obstinate he would have a hard job to keep his temper, and so would make bad matters worse. The calm, logical, sympathetic language that blunts the edge of passion and dissipates ill-humour was not at his command. Therefore he concluded, perhaps too hastily, that he had better say nothing at all.

“I think that about this time a temperate and judicious reprimand, a few words of patient enquiry, a little sympathy and advice would have braced me up and sent me back into the right road

again. I was only pining for some one to show an interest in what I did. A year or two later, however, I had become a confirmed sluggard, and my father, from being merely vexed and hurt, had grown bitterly irritated, and rather vindictive.

“My aunt spoke as if she had to administer a disagreeable dose, which, for her sake as well as mine, had better be got down by coaxing. But she only made bad matters worse by trying to sugar the pill; she only weakened her own arguments. ‘So long as you get on at the classics,’ she said, ‘your father doesn’t care about mathematics or French.’ Then she added that Sir Francis himself had never succeeded in conquering the difficulties of the multiplication table, that arithmetic was all very well for boys who were going into business, and that she was quite sure nothing worth learning was to be picked up from M. Malanglais, as, in her opinion, it was very doubtful whether he spoke with a pure accent. ‘You see,’ she continued, ‘people who mix in society are supposed—though I am sure I can’t tell why—to know something about Latin and Greek. All gentlemen know a little of the dead languages, though I think it a pity they can’t learn something more useful when boys, so I hope you will take pains. You need not overwork yourself, you know, but do please manage to do enough to satisfy your father.’

“I must honestly own that when she finished speaking I had a greater contempt for my work than ever. Had people nothing better than this to say in its behalf? Was it a mere sham? Why, then, need I trouble myself about it? I could see the use of mathematics; if *they* were contemptible, surely Latin and Greek, both admittedly barren of direct results, must be even less worthy of attention.

“I daresay you wonder at my aunt taking things so coolly when I was only a younger son, and had nothing in particular to look forward to. Many women, if they despised one branch of education as valueless, would have encouraged a boy to take up some other more likely in their opinion to be of practical use in the battle of life. But, in the first place, my aunt altogether underrated the importance of knowledge of any kind, and in the second she had an aversion, as she expressed it, to looking too far into the future.

“Nothing irritated her so much as people asking what profession I was intended to follow. Perhaps she resented the inquiry as a reflection on her age, since she stood to me very much in the relation of a mother; at all events, she always did her best to parry the question. In her opinion there was time enough, and to spare, before she and Sir Francis made up their minds. In these days it was difficult, she urged, to settle on anything. The



professions were all so overstocked. The Church was too spoony, the Bar was hardly the thing, she and her brother had some notion of the Army, but as yet she wasn't quite sure what they would do; perhaps I might fancy sailing; she had heard that money was to be made as a civil engineer, but somehow or another she should not like to think that her nephew was hardly a gentleman. She supposed something would turn up; they had to find out as yet in what direction my tastes lay.

"In point of fact, I fancy that she did not believe I should ever have to work at all. *She* had never worked, none of her near relations had ever worked, and she rather inclined to the supposition that for those in a certain rank of life, meat and drink, houses and lands, were dispensed as the free gift of Providence.

"As time passed, my energies began to flag seriously. I gained one more prize, and then, finding that it was welcomed even more coldly than the other had been, I allowed a deep calm, or, rather, a stagnation to set in. I was getting sick of work. It seemed to bring me no good, and only to cause me discomfort. All the fellows at the Grange had been jeering at me for a 'sap.' Nobody at home seemed to care much whether I got on or stood still; wouldn't it be better then if I tried a new tack altogether? I became a model of idleness, and the opposition abated. I began to have a quiet time of it. To be sure I was caned, but then everybody was caned. I only got a little more than other people, and I found I could bear it. Now and then, to be sure, I felt heartily ashamed of myself when I saw fellows whom I knew to be fools rising above me, but then I recollected my father and his stupidity in mathematics, and I felt fully justified in displaying the family incompetency in another form.

"Perhaps, if my teacher had been a sensible man, he might have had it in his power to do some good. But his only remedy for failure was the stick, and failure, from whatever cause, seemed to him to admit only of one kind of treatment.

"You were idle, you were a blockhead, you were languid from ill-health, you were exhausted from overwork—very well, you must be flogged. Sluggard, idiot, invalid, were, in *his* estimation, three synonymous terms, a trio of words, each of which meant precisely the same thing.

"So he never tried to find out *why* I had so rapidly and so mysteriously grown idle, but set to work pouring in doses of a strongly purgative nature, using the cane much in the same sort of way that some superstitious and ignorant people use blue pill.

"I began to hate Latin and Greek. Homer might be a grand poet; Horace might be tender and graceful; I could think of these writers only in connection with the stick. A cruel woman

is hateful—a cruel *handsome* woman is hatefullest of all. I could see some of the beauties of the old authors. Young as I was, I had a taste for poetry, but the glowing words, the sounding measures were for me too closely related to ill-treatment to be agreeable. Charming literature that could not be meddled with *minus* the penalty of cracks on the fingers and deafening boxes on the ear, seemed to me a revolting abortion. I could not help beginning to hate the classic muse. People said she was lovely. I could see some of her good points myself—but then she was such a brute! I had no wish to persevere in my courtship, and I determined that when I had the privilege of free choice I would look out for a mistress less superficially attractive, and a trifle more amiable. I fulfilled my intention when, some years later, to the indignation of my father, I began diligently to study mathematics.

“But my great grievance had always been that I was not allowed to learn drawing. I think I had a taste—perhaps I am justified in using the stronger expression talent—for art, certainly I was very fond of it. I had been busy with paper and pencil ever since I could remember, the only peculiarity of my genius being that up to the advanced age of seven I had drawn all my houses, cows, and trees topsy-turvy. I had also shown a propensity to grasp my pencil, very decidedly, in my clenched fist. I told visitors to their surprise that I found it easier to draw ‘that way’ than any other. But as my judgment ripened my eccentricities toned down. Long before I was nine I had learned to conduct operations in a manner more in accordance with the prevailing taste. My aunt, who had a languid sympathy with the fine arts, and thought painting an agreeable and useful accomplishment in a young man, aided me to the best of her ability, and even appealed to my father, urging that I should be put under a master. But he turned wrathfully away and muttered something about drawing being fit only for girls. In my vindictiveness I treasured up the hasty reply, and whenever I wanted justification for idleness I took out those few words and turned them over in my mind with a bitter joy. By the time I had dropped them back again into a snug corner of my memory my heart would be as hard as the nether millstone. I had by this time you see *two* grudges against my father. He had snubbed me when I had worked to please *him*; he would not allow me to work to please myself. I never felt so exasperated as once when the drawing master took up one of my sketches, praised it for its cleverness, and picked out a dozen technical faults at the same time. So then, I could have succeeded had they given me the chance. It was my only consolation to feel that even as it was I could beat all those who *did* learn hollow.

How I used to chuckle whenever, as often happened, some poor dolt stuck fast and could not for the life of him tell which was the horizontal and which the retiring line.

"I don't know whether it is the fashion now, but in *my* day it was usual to teach only those boys drawing who had no aptitude, and to leave those who had talent to shift for themselves. Parents whose sons had learnt to use a pencil of their own accord, looked upon the accomplishment as a waste of time, a fact not to be wondered at considering the hours a lad will devote to his pet pursuit when once he has found out that he possesses artistic ability. Those fathers and mothers, on the other hand, whose boys were mere dunces, often fancied that drawing would prove an agreeable 'extra,'—likely perhaps to refine coarse minds and clumsy hands, —without reflecting on the outlay of time and energy required even for tolerable proficiency. Further than this the anxious relatives of a fool knew that unless young hopeful were coached diligently, nothing could be expected of him, whereas the parents of a boy of talent usually entertained the delusion that he would get on right enough without any help from a master. Or all the people who prate about the power of inspiration and genius none are so exacting as those who hold both in utter contempt, who think that the highest if not the only function of God's great gift is to save the expense of a teacher.

"By the time I had been a year at Harton, and my tutor was beginning to say in the half-yearly reports that whatever might be the direction of my talents I should never do much at the classics, my aunt had resignedly given up all hopes of my success, and my father had arrived at the pleasant conclusion that I was an idiot. I did not at the time know how vexed, how disappointed, how almost exasperated he was, but I can guess now. He never let drop a word of anger or remonstrance, and this being so I fancied he had become quite indifferent either to my failure or success.

"By-and-bye, however, I noticed that he was beginning to treat me oddly. Hitherto he had been cold and reserved, now he showed open contempt and even hostility. This last term seems a peculiar one to use in speaking of a father, but I really cannot think of any other that would as well take its place. I was hurt, irritated, and somewhat surprised, but I had no suspicion of the cause of his strange conduct.

"I was elected the fool of the family. My father expressed by his behaviour certain theories regarding me which were singular, but not likely to encourage a better mutual understanding.

"I was a hopeless, mischievous idiot, and must be held down by a strong hand. I was a mere dog, and must be taught to obey



my master's whip. I was of coarse and blunted perceptions, and any show of gentleness or courtesy would be quite thrown away upon me. I was a chattering nuisance, and must be silenced without mercy. I was a moping maniac, and must be roused by shouts.

"My father seldom spoke to me without a scowl, and always in his gruffest accents. He frowned at me, and eyed me curiously as if I were a phenomenon to be studied. If I spoke, he either did not answer at all, or cut me short by beginning to whistle, or else by coughing loudly and repeatedly. If I asked him a question he would walk across the room, turn his back upon me, and profess to be quite taken up with something outside the window.

"If I dared in his presence to talk to my aunt or a visitor, he would rudely break in with a remark on any subject but that on the *tapis*. If anyone enquired after me he could not control his impatience; he would scrape his foot on the floor, and snort angrily. But the grand offence was for anyone to ask how I was getting on with my drawing. Those who committed this last heinous breach of good manners stirred his wrath to the dregs. He would utter a scathing jeer, bounce out of his chair, and dart from the room in a fury.

"Altogether I was beginning to have a pleasant time of it. But what annoyed me most of all was that Sir Francis took into his head to insinuate or to tacitly assume that I was guilty of such and such bad habits to which he knew that I had a particular aversion. Sometimes I was fond of a sly pull at the bottle, at others I was a backbiter and mischief-maker; occasionally I was a liar, or at all events a person troubled with a long and unruly tongue whom it would be dangerous to trust. Periodically I had the credit of being up to all sorts of mischief directly my father's back was turned, and he would now and then wink as if we understood each other perfectly, and he would twit me with my fondness for dull and rather malicious mimicry. Always I was a sullen, leaden-minded boor, who had an utter aversion for refined pursuits and decent society.

"By degrees I began quite to lose heart. I had no spirit for anything. I gradually grew as sullen, as shy, as pitifully nervous as I was assumed to have been all my life. I fell into a deep melancholy, I took to passing whole mornings and afternoons by myself. I shrank from meeting any but those I knew best, and even with them I was hardly at my ease. I felt that there was a brand upon me, that I was become hateful and contemptible, that however people might out of politeness try to conceal the fact, they looked upon me with scorn as the idiot son, the poor fellow

out of whom his highly respectable and anxious parents could make absolutely nothing at all.

“In the meantime my dear brother Harry was in fine feather. He was a darling in every way. He had always been good-looking but now he was quite a young Adonis, at least in his own estimation, and half the young ladies in the neighbourhood were head over ears in love with a dear little fellow who was as pretty and silly as they were themselves. Yes, Harry was a fool, for all that he got on so well at Elchester. It was the emptiness of his head that helped him to succeed. He worked merely because if he had remained idle he would have pined away for want of something to think about. Besides, the stick! Yes, Harry was not very brave. Anything rather than a little pain. I was not at school with the young wretch, but I can fancy him turning as white as a sheet, and humiliating himself, oh, so deliciously, whenever he had been stupider than usual and his master was beginning to lose patience. Harry could *kotoo* to perfection. After one or two small successes on my brother's part, my father arrived at the conclusion that he was to be the gentleman of the family and the scholar as well, and, with the sanction of Aunt Mary, who was formally consulted in all matters, an extra tap of tutelage was let on for the holidays. Didn't they keep him crammed up to the mark!

“Aunt Mary, by-the-bye, had no great fancy for her cherub-faced nephew. He was pleasant to the sight, and very clean, and daintily apparelled, and sweet-smelling, and nice to touch, also he had easy and pleasant manners, and Nature had patted him on the back and bid him go and shine in the world, but she was suspicious of a lad who with his peculiar temperament took so readily to his books. She had an unconcealed aversion to ‘good’ little boys, and the mixture of the fop and the scholar did not please her. Secondly, she could have no sympathy with a young man who hated and dreaded the arts in all their branches, who had even spoken of Turner as the author of the Cartoons, and of the Opera, to which he had been twice, as the greatest bore of fashionable life. Besides, Harry was too fond of billiards and pipes for *her* taste. He might be a very exemplary youth, but certainly the last time she and Sir Francis were in town he had kept suspiciously late hours, and—well a fast *man* was all very well, but a fast *boy*—pah!

“But the head of the family delighted in his first-born, and talked of him as if there were not such another lad on the face of the earth. Harry, though intellectually a dunce, had his wits, such as they were, about him, and took particular pains to keep his father in a good humour. He was intended to be a gentleman

—well, a gentleman he was, according to his own and Sir Francis' acceptance of the term. He 'looked the part,' as they say on the stage, and he so seldom troubled himself to think or reflect on the grievances of other people that he was never glum, or out of sorts. Like a good many selfish persons, he had a capital stock of animal spirits, he was always lively and self-confident; nature had made him stronger than she had made me. He had a flippant pitiless wit which was very pleasant to those who liked a dash of malice in their jokes, but the readiness of his humour was more remarkable than its brilliancy or good taste. He had a warm sunny smile that seldom failed him; he professed to look only on the bright side of things, and if anything occurred to put him out of temper he had a very safe way of venting his rage by expending it on his horse, which he treated abominably. But Harry always rather enjoyed tormenting animals; a beast could not cry out, it could not turn evidence against him, its mute agony was more *recherché* and less terrifying than the endurance of a man or of a boy who determinedly hid his pain and stored the insult or injury up in his mind against a future day of reckoning. But to his father Harry was simply the amiable, the respectful, the somewhat impulsive, the wholly unsophisticated, but the decidedly amusing.

"At school too he had done so capitally, he had quite redeemed the family honour. He had not at the outset shown bright talent, but he had improved so; he was admirably adapted to working in a groove; he had no absurd tastes or wild cravings to prevent his doing patiently and tolerably just what he was told to. Oh, he was a son to be proud of—yes, and after all, I don't know that he was so much to blame for that little escapade at Elcheater; boys will be boys, and I daresay that troublesome fag of his had given him provocation. Harry was not at all obstinate, he would just as soon do one thing as any other; he had no tastes at all, consequently nothing to distract his attention; he was by no means wayward, you had only to hold up a good thick stick and he would turn pale and perform your bidding at once. He was not likely ever to be a great or a good man; but who wants great or good men now-a-days? He would always be thoroughly respectable, because thoroughly conventional, you might safely reckon on *that*—and what a consolation to parents—no generous enthusiasm, no high-flown sentiments, no incomprehensible scruples would ever turn *him* aside from the beaten track; his was a character without angles, it was as plastic, as accommodating as putty; to be sure it had a few trifling blemishes, but what mind, however insipid, but has a characteristic feature or two more or less faintly delineated?

Harry was never *outré*; it was much to his credit that he always



did everything exactly like other people : he dressed carefully, and in the prevailing taste ; if the upper ten thousand conspired amongst themselves to wear a hat with a high crown and a curly brim, Harry followed the lead ; if society approved of frock coats, a breast like a pouter pigeon's, and a flower in the button-hole, so did Harry ; if the youthful aristocracy of Great Britain took pleasure in smiling vacuously on meeting an acquaintance, Harry's grin was as formal and unmeaning as that of anybody else. Harry was very pretty, very charming, sufficiently but not too industrious, quite as steady as most young men of the day, not more extravagant than the average, certainly not troubled with offensive or *bizarre* opinions ; he was neither oppressively good nor scandalously bad. Wasn't he exactly the sort of fellow that a father of the period ought to be proud of for a son-in-law, that a girl of the period would desire for a husband ? Harry was the incarnation of the commonplace ; wasn't he admirably adapted to the age in which Nature, knowing old girl that she is, had seen fit to place him ? ”

Dick ceased.

I drew aside the curtain and looked out at the night. Black as the grave ; no sign of a change ; the rain dashing against the window like spray from a stormy sea ; a thorough banshee wail in the wind ; a dull monotonous dripping on the leads outside, splash after splash falling with a sound like a sob. There was a rushing, roaring noise in the air like the murmur of on-coming waters ; it was the wind playing in its own rough way with the trees in the garden. The lamp over the gate swung to and fro and creaked dismally ; church bells in the distance were striking the hour.

A miserable depressing night.

I turned from the window with a shudder. I sat down again in my chair by the fire. Dick threw on some more coals, and resumed his story.

## CHAPTER VI.

“Soon after I left Harton,” said my friend, “I ventured to ask my Aunt Mary whether my father had any notion how I was to get my living, if he intended me to follow any profession, and if not, whether he were going to make such provision for me that I could spend the rest of my days in glorious idleness.

“My aunt waited a moment without answering. She bent her head down over her work and seemed to hesitate.

“‘I have spoken to your father,’ she said, at last, ‘but he will not give a decided answer. If—if you had shown more taste for

the classics,' she went on, keeping the implied reproach as much as possible in the background, 'I think he would have liked you to go into the Church. But you know, with the expenses of Harry's education, he could hardly afford now to send you to the University. I should have liked the army, but *that*, I am afraid, is quite out of the question. Have you any particular fancy? What do you think of the Engineers? It isn't exactly what I should wish, but I believe there is money to be made by it. However, even that may be too expensive. If you will tell me what your own ideas are, I will speak to your father, and do the best I can for you. But he is certainly disappointed at your not having got on better, and I am afraid he is hardly in a position just now to lay out much money.'

" 'I suppose,' I broke in, 'that he thinks too much has been spent on the fool of the family already?'

" 'Don't speak like that,' answered my aunt, 'it is not agreeable. It is too bad if I am to be blown up by Sir Francis, and have to bear your ill-humour as well; I do my best for you, and I can't do more. I really think you might have tried to please both of us a little better than you have done. A person in your father's position has many calls upon him, and the income of the estate is not nearly as large as people suppose. Sir Francis has been obliged to raise money of late, and he has had losses, and Harry, you know, must live up to his position. A young man, and a baronet's son, can't get on at Christ Church on a mere pittance. I don't at all blame your father for wishing to keep up the family dignity. It is the very thing I should try to do myself were I in his place. Harry is not so very extravagant, and I should not care to see him cut out and thrown into the shade by some *parvenu* or rich tradesman's son.'

" 'So on the whole,' I added, vindictively, 'you agree with Sir Francis, that there is no harm in throwing the children's bread to the dogs.'

" 'If you talk like that,' answered my aunt, 'I will get up and leave the room. It is really *too* bad.'

" 'I won't annoy you again, if I can help it,' I returned. 'I am rather out of sorts; I have got into a nasty habit of looking on the dark side of things, but I have had provocation enough. If my father expected me to do anything, why didn't he tell me so? How was I to guess what he wanted when he always held his tongue? Besides, the classics are not everything; I have done well enough at mathematics; I have made head in physical science; I can draw—not well, because I have never studied, but far better than anybody at Harton. I may say *that* without any sacrifice of

modesty. And to be the first of three hundred is *something*, though it may not be anything extraordinary.'

"‘I don't see that you can make a fortune at mathematics,’ said my aunt, ‘I hardly know what good physical science is likely to be to you. Drawing is all very well in its way, but you can't seriously suppose that your father will find money to set you up as an artist?’

"‘I don't suppose he will find money to set me up as anything,’ was my hasty and bitter reply. ‘If you cannot make a fortune in a direct way by mathematics, neither can you do so by Latin and Greek. My argument seemed simple enough. I only wished to show that I was not to be treated as an utter fool because I had not done all that had been expected of me in a certain line. The question is, does my father intend to help me, or does he not; because in the latter case I had better set to work as soon as possible to help myself.’

"‘I think,’ said my aunt, flushing up, ‘you will find it the wisest plan to avoid putting yourself in a passion, and to be more patient. I can't do everything at once; I have done the best I can, and if you are not satisfied I really cannot help it. I was in hopes you would take to some gentlemanly pursuit, but what with your strange tastes and your rudeness and ill-humour, I really don't know what to make of you. It is all excessively provoking, and I wish you would speak to Sir Francis yourself. He is as surly as a bear whenever I mention your name, and I can assure you it is by no means pleasant having to meddle in the matter at all. If you would just manage to keep your temper, and tell me what you *do* want, I would speak to your father on the first decent opportunity and try to explain matters and to find out exactly what he is able and willing to do for you. More than this it is not in my power to promise. But I must tell you again that he is very much offended indeed at the reports he has had from Harton, and I don't for a moment believe he will fall in with any plan likely to entail a heavy expense.’

"‘I looked at my aunt, but I fear not amiably. ‘Do what you please,’ I answered roughly, and out of all patience, ‘depend upon it I shall take as little from my father as I well can. I am beginning to hate the home that seems to hate *me*, and all I want is to get away from this vile place and to be able to shift for myself. Tell Sir Francis his best plan is to get me off his hands as soon as possible. He will then have the more money to waste on his own extravagancies and my dear brother's follies. It is not discouragement from my failures, but the natural result of his own blundering in money matters that makes him unwilling to help me. As for you, Aunt Mary, I believe you mean well, but I can-



not thank you ; in your heart you side with my father. But I am ungrateful to say that,' I added, checking my ill-humour and ashamed of my rudeness, 'you are the only person who has been kind or even decently civil to me for months past. But I have been badgered into a chronic ill-temper. Try and forgive me. For the future I will be a man, and keep myself under better control. If you speak to Sir Francis and can do me any good I shall be sincerely obliged. I am sorry you should have to meddle in the matter, but you know it would be a mere waste of time for me to speak in my own behalf. If he asks what I think of doing tell him I should be content with a clerkship—anything to be free and away from Culverton. But I am forgetting myself again. I don't expect or wish him to do much ; I only want to be given a start, to relieve him of an encumbrance, to be put in the way of helping myself.'

"In a day or two my aunt fulfilled her promise. She went into the library and came back looking dismayed. She found me in the garden, and it was easy to see that she was perplexed. She had made up her mind to speak to me, but she was unwilling to begin. She had failed, done more harm than good, and she knew it. She broke the barrier of silence by an effort. She had a book in her hand, and while addressing me she kept her eyes constantly fixed on it. She fidgeted over her words and phrases ; she stammered, grew confused and incoherent. Then she began to make excuses—very lame ones—and in an apologetic tone as if she were rather ashamed of herself and hardly knew what to say, but hoped I would not be angry.

"Sir Francis, it appeared had frowned, scowled, and walked impatiently up and down the room when she announced her mission. Naturally, she had made quick work of the interview. He had disconcerted her at the outset. She saw that he was in a bad temper and at the point of an explosion, and she dreaded a scene. She was not deliberately false or fickle, but she wanted to pacify him ; so she sided against me at once. She owned, in answer to the worthy baronet's remonstrances, or rather growls, that I *was* impatient, that I *was* flighty, that I *was* unreasonable, but directly she found herself safe out in the open air she confessed penitently that she had been obliged to give in, that Sir Francis was in one of his tempers, in one of his obstinate fits, and that there was no doing anything at all with him. She had not meant to fail me, still less to turn traitor, but she had been frightened out of her wits. She smoothed matters over for herself as well as she could, she spoke of all that she had done with an aggrieved air as if to anticipate any possible reproach, contradicted herself more than once, kept her eyes fixed on the ground, flushed up with

shame, mortification and nervous excitement, and directly she had finished speaking turned abruptly and hurried indoors.

“My father had put himself in a passion at the very idea of a clerkship. He had no claim, he said, on the Government; he had no interest; he could not do anything at all for me: he knew no heads of departments; he did not believe I had talent enough for the work; he could not go about pestering his acquaintances. I should want an outfit and money to start with—he could not give me either: I must wait. Perhaps in a year or two he might be able to do something; he could do nothing at present. Everyone was pulling on him; he was a ruined man, a beggar; the workhouse stared him in the face. He had spent money enough on me already, and no good had come of it. A clerkship was not a profession. It was lowering the *status* of the family; I should starve; where was I going to live? I could not get bread and cheese on a hundred a year. You could not make head in the Civil Service without interest, etc., etc.

“My aunt, after twenty minutes or so of the above, felt frightened and uncomfortable. She saw all that my father intended her to see, viz.: that he would not make a move of any kind, that for some secret reason of his own he was determined not to let me out of his clutches, and altogether she felt that she had better withdraw. This she did as soon and as quietly as possible.

“I had overheard part of the discussion, and that is how I am able to give you my father’s speech *in extenso*. I am not an eaves-dropper, but I passed the library at the time that it was going on, and Sir Francis was speaking very loud. Sometimes, whatever your resolutions may be, you cannot help stopping to listen. For just two minutes I remained bound to the spot. I could not help it—the subject was vitally interesting to me, and I was under a spell. I did not go any nearer the door, I can say that much for myself. It was not long before I recovered my self-control. I hurried away towards the verandah, but I had spent time enough in the passage to make me feel heartily ashamed of myself.

“Having found out my father’s intentions, I began to arrange accordingly. I set to work with my books harder than ever. I had made up for a good deal of lost time since I had left Harton, but now I resolved to devote at least eight hours a day to reading. I did so. I am not strong, and at the end of a couple of months I looked like a ghost.

“In the meanwhile I had written and secretly posted a letter to Sir George Fotheringay. I received an answer, disappeared mysteriously for a day or two, and came back to Culverton, having caused much amazement, but determined to let out nothing more

than was absolutely necessary. I said enough to prove that I had not been up to mischief—there I stopped short.

“I had seen Sir George—I had told him everything, and he had made me the promise about which I have already spoken. Six months more and a note came bidding me go up to town without delay, and pass an examination. My aunt, to my astonishment, was quite pleased. Even Sir Francis thawed; but both, no doubt, were glad on the whole to get me away from Culverton without trouble or expense to themselves. My father, when he found that it was no good trying to thwart me any longer, turned civil and almost complimentary. He had sense enough to see that the time for keeping me under his thumb was past, and resigned with the best grace in the world any advantage that he might have hoped to reap from doing so.

“In less than a fortnight I was seated at the desk, where with slight intervals of newspaper reading and refreshment, I have remained from ten to five every day for the last twelvemonth.

“Why, you ask, did I make a secret of my plans? Simply because my father being so prejudiced against me, and so unaccountable in his behaviour, I was afraid of his interference.

“You want to know if I like my life. Well, frankly, I do not. But it is better than being at Culverton, and I hope to climb up to something else before long. I keep my eyes open, and at all events I am no burden to anybody.

“Yes, this isn’t a bad room. My aunt gave me some of the furniture. I painted the pictures myself. I got the sofa and the arm-chairs second hand. The table-cover I bought years ago; the books have been collecting for I don’t know how long. I had some of them when I was at Harton. After all I don’t believe the whole contents of my two rooms would fetch forty shillings in the market. I take a pride in keeping things straight, and I have my own notions of order. It is wonderful what you can do with a little pains, and I really flatter myself my den looks pretty comfortable. At all events I manage to hide the nakedness of the land. I am a jack-of-all-trades, and can even varnish a table, whitewash a ceiling, paper a wall, and nail up a shelf, if need be. Oh, yes, and I can cook you a very good dinner. Look at this gas stove; hot, roast, and boiled at all hours of the day.”

## CHAPTER VII.

“AND now,” said my friend, after a short pause, “I am going to tell you a little story that will, I think, make you stare.

“About a fortnight ago I was taken with a fit of restlessness.



I could not settle down to anything. I felt hipped, and sometimes of an evening when I had escaped from the office I would wander about for hours merely because I was irritable and excited and could not work myself into decent spirits in any other way.

"I am not fond of in-door life; I am not over patient, and though I am always making up my mind to do this, that and the other, I doubt whether I am persevering.

"At all events, I have not perseverance of a certain kind. I can stick to a thing though I hate it, but I cannot stick to anything disagreeable, and bring myself to like it in course of time. Now some people *can* do this, and they are much to be envied, and no doubt, to be admired. There are folk who work at the treadmill, not resignedly, but with pleasure. Everything and anything comes easy to them in course of time.

"Now, even though it be an admission of weakness, I must own that when I have an unpleasant task to get through I am in a fever to have it finished. A *run* of tedious and aggravating work maddens me. I don't kick over the traces; I have just enough resolution to prevent my irritation getting the better of me, but I fret in secret like a great baby, and by degrees I work myself into a fever.

"I am not a patent self-adjusting candle; I don't fit easily into a socket.

"My body is the humble obedient servant of the master of the chain gang, but my thoughts wander, and though I am never rebellious I cannot be content.

"I am not a good machine, because Nature was pleased to give me tastes, longings, and ingrained propensities; I don't say aspirations, because I have an objection to using long words that have been worn threadbare or used recklessly till they have become offensive.

"Oh, no, I am not a neglected genius, don't fancy I mean *that* for a moment, but my mind wants something more nutritious to feed on than husks, it cannot sleep more than nine or ten hours out of the twenty-four, and when set down to a meal of picked bones and the rinsings of other people's tumblers it has a tendency to fly off in quest of provender more attractive.

"I cannot buckle determinedly to a routine of mere hand-work. Of course, when I say this I am admitting that I have not a well regulated mind. But a man's soul is not a watch, and even a watch proves restive at times.

"To be sure great geniuses have drudged in heart-breaking slavery, and have done all that was expected of them, but I question whether they liked the business, and I question still more whether their talents were turned to the best account. As a rule,

it doesn't answer to crush butterflies with a steam-hammer. Strength unnecessarily expended is strength wasted; a tolerably familiar proposition, but worth repeating now-a-days, when people misapply brain power without remorse, and even boast of doing so, and grin aggravatingly at their fancied cleverness.

"Caliban pops Pegasus into harness, gives him a sly kick or two, rasps his knees, and says, 'Look at the brute, for all his wings and flashing eyes he is not worth much in the cart, he is a very second-rate animal, obstinate and prone to shy; and as for his restiveness, Lord bless you, he has no cause to grumble; what right have such as he to look heavenwards? he ought to be decorously content with that state of life to which I, in my supreme ignorance, have been pleased to call him.'

"For a few telling remarks on the subject of misapplied or utterly wasted wind-power, and anent that time-honoured problem of the three-cornered pegs and the round holes, I can refer you to a little work of Mr. Ruskin's—perhaps you have seen it already—called the 'Political Economy of Art.'

"But, as I said before, I don't consider myself a neglected genius, though I *do* think that I have some excuse for an occasional growl, and if, in spite of my best efforts, my attention sometimes wanders, I can't help *that*. Oh, no, I can't, whatever steady-going people may say. If you have a genuine inborn taste it will force its way out whatever you may do to the contrary. Nature is not to be baulked by anything *you* may say or determine. It is all very fine to talk about prudence, contentment, and so forth, but she has set you a task to do, and do it you must. Or if you prefer being called a coward, you may shirk the fight, and then your conscience will never let you have a moment's peace for the rest of your prudent existence.

"The claims of comfort are all very well in their way, but the claims of duty are paramount. It is the creed of the present age that you ought not to be ambitious, that you should put up thankfully with whatever comes to hand first, that a man who buckles on his armour and goes down into that dark valley, into the hot of the fight, determined to do or to die, is a fool for his pains. But we have been told by a tolerably good authority of a certain prudent individual who hid his talent in a napkin, and who was not commended for his pains. Nothing venture, nothing win—not even self-respect—and the amount of available capacity now lying out to rot—in the Civil Service, for instance—is disgusting, because it bespeaks cowardice. How much shall I get for being a man? is the question asked now-a-days, and if the answer be kicks and cuffs to begin with, and perhaps a great victory in the future, 'very well,' says our reticent nineteenth century genius, 'hardknocks are disagreeable, I think I will sue for a clerkship.'

"The motto of our young men now-a-days is 'Compromise.' Rather than trust to ourselves it is better to hang on to the coat-tails of the great. Our middle-class talent is mostly of an amateur kind; we are quill-drivers by day, artists in our odd moments.

"But mark this; if God gives us capacity, he means us to use it. Woe to those who crush the gift obstinately, or fling it contemptuously aside. If the voice of the Great Captain be heard, soldiers who are men and not ninnies must be up and away; all must be risked; we must have faith and never mind about prudence; houses and lands, delicate living, and the praises of our friends, must go to the wall.

"A fanatical doctrine. Do you think so? Not very well expressed, I admit, but sound in itself, though it may *seem* odd, as just now it is the fashion with young men to scoff at earnestness in any form.

"I am afraid I am becoming a nuisance. But you are a good fellow, and will have mercy upon me and my hobbies.

"I said just now that I did my work at the office conscientiously, but without liking it. I am often in a fidget, for I can't keep my thoughts quiet. They will have their way, and I shall have to give in to them by and bye, but I don't mean to do so yet. I daresay you think I ought to be content with things as they are. I daresay I am the victim of a delusion. But, as long as I can remember, a voice in the distance has been calling to me, first in a whisper, then as I grew older, more loudly, and obey it I must, and before long, too, happen what may.

"I shall come a cropper—shall I? Well, at all events I shall have done what I think right; I shall have set my hand firmly to the plough; I shall not have done violence to my conscience.

"Oh, that work at the office. A few years of it, and I should go melancholy mad, or be petrified body and soul. A civil service appointment is a good makeshift, but to bake bricks in Egypt all your life, to sell your best energies, your golden opportunities into bondage of that sort for ever and for aye! And yet people do it and whistle away the period of their vegetation right merrily.

"Oh, that work that is no work, that sawing through time as if it were a deal board, that loitering at windows, that doing anything to shove on the minutes before the clock strikes five, that scratching of pens and pasting together of envelopes, that work not fatiguing but fidgeting, not brain-tasking but hand-enslaving, to perform which you have only to wind up the clockwork, regulating your fingers and your eyes, leaving the soul to wander disconsolately whithersoever it will.

"You can resign yourself to drudgery if you feel that by so doing you make sure of a good foundation, you can turn yourself



into a machine, and that without a murmur, if there be a prospect of reward and relief in the future, you can put up with shot drill and the crank if you are convinced that they are indispensable to a period of probation, but to become an automaton, with the prospect of never being anything else—good heavens!

“And yet what a discontented unmanageable brute I must be. So long as you have a snug berth, what does it matter whether you increase in wisdom and favour with God and man, or gradually rot away body and soul, out of sight, out of mind! It is quite a mistake to suppose we are sent into the world to be of any use to ourselves or to other people, we were intended to vegetate and to get on comfortably—and all those wild notions about energy, and self-sacrifice, and doing all the good you can, are utter humbug, rant only fit for the pulpit. Don’t you think so?

“I can put up with headwork, but there is something sickening in having to waste time by line and rule, in collecting a load of hay by single straws, in spinning out the job in hand so that you may always *seem* to be doing something, though, if wise, you don’t really exert yourself for fear of having the work of every lazy fellow in the office thrown on to your too conscientious shoulders.

“I can’t stand those ‘forms,’ I can’t get seriously interested in arriving, morning after morning, five minutes before anybody else to tear letters out of their covers and to stamp them with the office mark in the right hand corner. I can do work when it is work, though it may require all my attention day and night for weeks together, but I can’t resign myself to this half and half exertion, this making the most out of trifles, this form of labour without its spirit, this copying of engravings line for line, this expenditure of mind-power for no proportionate result, this conversion of hands and brains into a second-rate copying-press.

“But don’t fancy I am going to ‘create a vacancy,’ I am not so fickle as all that. I may not like what I am doing now, but I would rather keep on at the desk for years than go back to the life I was leading at Culverton.

“I am fidgety and out of sorts, that is all. I don’t mean to stick to the Civil Service for good, but I may remain a clerk for some time to come yet, though I am sure I shall never be reconciled to the work. Its routine and utter want of interest goad me into a restlessness that *won’t* be kept under. I try to settle down and take things easily, but I can’t. Often of a night I wander and wander till I am dead beat, and then, tired out, I make my way home, sometimes to drop asleep in my chair. Office hours once over, I must be off, and after that the sole of my foot has no rest till it is swollen, sore, and blistered from much walking.

"My fit was at its height about the time the wet weather set in, but rain, wind, and mud could not keep me indoors. I was possessed with a demon of disquiet, and wander I felt I must.

"One evening when the streets were a couple of inches deep in slime, and the wind howled like a pack of hungry wolves, and the rain swept forward in a thick wreathing mist, I hurried away from my fireside after hastily swallowing a cup of tea and some bread and butter that, like Macbeth's 'Amen,' stuck in my throat, and feeling utterly out of spirits and in a sort of suicidal humour, I turned into Holborn.

"There at least was life and a certain degree of activity, and there are times when the poorest society in the world is better than being alone.

"It was not an evening for sauntering about, besides, the shop-windows streamed down with an unwholesome moisture, a kind of adulterated tears, so thick that there was no seeing anything through them. I buttoned my coat together tightly, turned the collar up round my neck, thrust my hands into my pockets, and able to bid some sort of defiance to wind and wet I started on my pilgrimage in search of a better temper.

"It was as bad a night as ever I was out in. It was not merely stormy, but vindictive, merciless, bullying weather. As superstitious old women would have said, the devil seemed abroad. It was not steady rain that was coming down, but a frantic torrent; it was not merely a *wet* night, but one that seized deftly on all your weak points, and soaked you through at a moment's notice. The blast—it was really a blast—cuffed the wretched gas-lights till they bobbed up and down, and dodged right and left, to escape its furious blows, sobbed piteously, and now and then disappeared for a moment altogether.

"It was a bad time for people who had nothing better to depend on than slim, light-handled umbrellas; it was a bad time for old women who sate at stalls and protected themselves against wind and rain as best they could with a square yard of canvas stretched from pole to pole; it was a bad time for wives and sisters out marketing, or coming home from their day's work, and whose drenched, clinging, flapping skirts acted merely as clumsily hoisted sails that kept them longer and yet longer out of the harbour of refuge. It was the sort of weather that makes weak, nervous, tired-out girls and women who are exposed to it cry with vexation, that seems to have in it a real spirit of malice, and to take especial delight in tormenting those who have the least defence against its violence. I don't wish to seem profane, but I could not help thinking it was a hell of a night for those who *must* wander, having no home to go to, and for those, only a degree better off, who

have to drudge on, and drudge on, shivering and exhausted, with a splendid appetite that cannot possibly be satisfied, all for the sake of those heavy greasy halfpence that some people pocket with a frown, but which to others—poor hungry souls—are more comforting than the smile of kings, or the gracious glance of beauty.

“I walked on a little way, and then stopped for a moment to watch the people going into the Casino, but the sight was not an enlivening one, and I again started on my travels.

“By-and-bye I arrived at the West End. I wandered aimlessly through terraces, squares, and gardens, finding something congenial in the mysterious solemnity of the broad, empty streets, till at last I chanced to pause near a portico in front of which a discussion was going on between a policeman and a pale-faced, delicately-featured girl in shabby mourning, who was rolled up on the doorsteps like a bundle of old rags.

“‘You can’t stop here,’ I heard the man say, in a gruff tone that yet had in it a dash of kindliness. ‘It’s against orders; you must move on, and, if I was you, I would be looking out for a lodging before it’s too late. Haven’t you *anywhere* to go to? And yet, young woman, you seem one of the better sort. You don’t belong to the streets, *I’ll* be sworn, and it’s time such as you should be in bed and out of danger. A portico isn’t the place for those who have a good name, especially on a night like this. Come now, take my advice, go back to where you came from, they’ll listen and open their door if you only put it in the right way. If they ain’t quite brutes they’ll give you a roof over your head till you can shift for yourself. Surely you’ve *some* friends. You look poorly. You are half starved *I* can see. Well, I ain’t a rich man—I’ve a wife and kids of my own at home, but look here, it ain’t much to be sure, but take it and heartily welcome. It’ll get you a crust and a drop o’ something to put a bit of life into you. Why, your hands are like marble. This won’t do, you must cheer up. Things will come right by-and-bye, you know. Of course, if you like, I can take you to the station, but it isn’t comfortable quarters. Oh no, you mustn’t refuse this here, though it *is* only threepence. You mustn’t say no, because I seem a low sort of fellow.’

“‘What is the matter?’ I asked, touching the good-natured policeman on the shoulder.

“The man rubbed his chin. ‘Why,’ he answered, reflectively, ‘she says as she is locked out—turned away this morning, neck and crop. And I believe it too,’ he added in a lower tone, ‘she’s not one of *our* sort; she’s not a swell thingummey out of luck. I can tell ’em in a minute. She’s poorly dressed, but she’s a lady, I can see *that*. Some quarrel with her family, perhaps—God



knows. But I daresay you can make a guess as well as I can. It's hard lines for her now, poor thing. Maybe she's served her time, and he's thrown her over. I suppose that's about the long and short of it. I found her here, crouched up on the doorstep in this awful rain—why, it'll be the death of her! Besides, it's against our orders, you know. She seems quite dazed like, and doesn't look as if she had had enough to eat lately. Ah, they treats poor creatures like her very bad. When I sees girls drove to this, I think of my own old woman and the young 'uns at home. Some people though have no feeling even for their own flesh and blood. Maybe this is a bit of gay life, as they call it. And yet she has a wedding-ring—a make-believe perhaps. Look how she leans against the railing; it ain't shamming, *that* ain't. No,' and the man dropped his voice, 'I have seen the poor things, mere children some of them, when—when they've been brought up from the artificial water, too late to be of use, after they are cold and stiff, and they've had just that fixed stony look. . . . You are a young man, sir, but you don't seem one of the wild sort. If you are a Christian and a gentleman, you may be able to help the poor soul. You needn't be ashamed to. A better than you or me didn't mind being seen to do good to worse than I take her to be. . . . If *you* speak, maybe it'll come kinder to her. I'm a rough fellow, and she don't understand my ways, nor I quite hers. I can't express it well, you see, sir, but if you don't mind saying a few words, I think she might listen. Come, sir,' added the man, after a moment's pause, 'do you care to do anything or not? as else I had better be taking her to the station. It won't do to leave her alone now, or she'll be up to something desperate.'

"I am ashamed to say I hesitated. The position in which I found myself was novel and unexpected. I should have been glad to be of any use, but I really was at my wit's end.

"The kind-hearted policeman saw my confusion, and interpreted it rightly.

"'I see what you think, sir,' he said, quietly. 'You say to yourself, it's a ticklish job, my meddling in this here matter. If any of my friends should hear of it, they'd give their own turn to the story. I don't care to bother myself about a girl, who, for all her looks, mayn't be of the best; who is young and genteel, but not exactly an object of charity—not what we in the force should call a professional.\* No doubt she is in awful trouble, but still, you says to yourself, I can't risk my good name. . . . Well now, if you'll allow me to say it, sir, I shouldn't much care what the world said so long as my conscience told me I was right. Take my word for it, this here young woman is the true sort;

\* Professional beggar.

honesty's written in her face. . . . We can only choose between three things—she must be left to wander about, or I must take her in charge, or you and I together must do what we can for her. If we leave her to herself God knows what will happen between this and to-morrow; then, as I said before, the station ain't comfortable quarters; besides which I have a notion in my head and I fancy as how we may settle things satisfactory to all parties. I ain't got much money, so I can't help her *that way*, but if you don't mind laying out a shilling or two, I think I can do something in my turn. . . . She's so poorly dressed, and so strange looking altogether, that, let alone other reasons, you wouldn't like taking her to any place where they know you. Now there's a party I am acquainted with—a very decent body—living in a quiet respectable street out of Holborn. I think she'd do what she could to oblige me. If you like to take the poor soul to this here old lady, she'd be in good hands, and you wouldn't be inconvenienced any way. If you have a bit of paper and a pencil in your pocket I'll just write down a few words which you can give her. She'll know who you come from. She's not a grab-all; it won't cost you the money you'd have to lay out elsewhere; besides, the young woman will be taken care of, and in the state of mind she is in now it wouldn't do to leave her to herself. But of course if you have anything in hand, and don't like the job, you can give the girl a trifle and let her be off. All I can do is to move her on. I mayn't go off my beat, and it's against orders for her to be loitering about here.'

"‘I have a pencil and paper too,’ I answered, ‘and am much obliged to you for your offer. If you will write what you have promised, I will put her into a cab and see her off at once; she looks dead-beat, and must be drenched through and through. I don't believe she has heard a word we have said, she looks as if she had forgotten all about us.’

"‘Ah!’ returned the policeman, gruffly, ‘they get wild like when they come to the pass *she's* got to. They lose their head, and have only one thought, and that a sort of nightmare that won't leave them. She's like some poor beast run to earth, she can't turn or double any more, she sees nothing in front of her but the river. There's many a young creature like her about at night, and a deal of good might be done, and many an awful and sudden death prevented if folk would only be patient and not run off with the idea that every ill-used young thing they see is as bad as bad can be. It isn't your hardened ones as often comes to a pass like this. A kind word now and then, a little help, and not quite so much make-believe propriety; that is what I should like to see. But respectability, as the saying goes, is some people's

idol—there's many as wouldn't help a poor girl in distress because, say they, it would look so queer, what would so-and-so and so-and-so say if they saw me walking along with a creature all rags and tatters? Then, says another, ain't there the workhouse? I can't compromise myself; I daresay she's not worse off than a good many. That's the way folk talk; God forgive them. But if ever people jeer at you for doing good, even when appearances is against you, remember what I said just now, d—n what the world thinks so long as I does what's right.'

"Policeman X was a very good fellow but an inveterate gossip. If he had not sworn I should have fancied that he did a little preaching at odd moments, he was so desperately bent on improving the occasion. I thanked him, wished him good night, took down his number in case I should have need of him in the future, hailed a four-wheeler that happened at the moment to be shivering and jingling eastwards, and taking the hand of the young girl, who remained leaning against the railings, her face pale and expressionless, her eyes fixed on vacancy, tried to rouse her, and secure her attention.

"The policeman—I suppose the force have so little conversation on the beat that they make the most of any opportunity to hear the sound of their own voices—again constituted himself spokesman, no doubt feeling that my eloquence, whatever he might have hoped from it, was even less effective than his own.

"'Come now, miss,' he said, 'rouse yourself; don't take on so. Things are coming round again; trust to us. You'll not have to remain in the streets any longer. We have settled everything as right as a trivet. This here gentleman will see you safe to a respectable lodging. You've nothing to fear, you are among friends, cheer up my pretty. You are a lady, we can see that, and you will be treated as such. You are better now, ain't you? You see the cab is all ready. You mustn't remain out here in the wet. Ah, you're tired and cramped; never mind, you can lean on my arm. Now, cabby! 27, Little Cator Street, Holborn; quick!'

"The girl raised her large plaintive eyes to the policeman's face, and they filled with tears. She tried to speak, but her voice failed her. Robert Roberts placed her tenderly inside the vehicle and slammed the door. Then she made an effort and conquered. She seized the man's big, rough hand, and pressed it convulsively. 'God bless you,' she cried, 'yours are the first kind words I have heard for weeks past. Oh, I am such a—such a worthless, poor, ground-down creature, I don't deserve all this trouble. But—but—oh, you are such a good man. An hour ago, I thought I should never hear a word of pity again.'



"I jumped up beside the driver; there was a crack of the whip, and we had started.

"In about five-and-twenty minutes we reached our journey's end.

"The street in which we found ourselves was dark and the houses were of different shapes and sizes. The wind was blowing in passionate gusts, and the rain rattled in my face like a volley of dried peas, so I had no opportunity of noticing anything attentively. I moved from one side of the road to the other, and from three successive doors to a fourth, before I hit on the right address. Then I pulled a handle that I found with difficulty and which produced a faint tinkle as from a sheep bell in the distance. While waiting for an answer I had time to remark that No. 27, Little Cator Street, was a three-storied house, with a perfectly flat red brick front, and an entrance door approached by a low flight of steps rising from a paved enclosure bordered by railings. A light shone from an upper window; the rest of the house was in darkness. Over the way stretched a wall joining two buildings, one rather larger than the other. Further in the background a couple of trees swayed dismally to and fro and suggested a private garden or an enclosure sacred to some small square in the immediate neighbourhood.

"By the time I had observed thus much, there was a pattering of feet on the stairs, followed by a fumbling at the bolt, the grating of a key in its socket, and the lowering of a chain.

"The door was opened by a slatternly little girl with the face of a middle-aged woman, who, shading with one hand the flame of a guttering candle, looked up at me steadily and enquiringly, and in a curiously dry and subdued voice asked me whom I was pleased to want.

"I gave the name written down by the policeman; whereupon she civilly begged me to come in, closed the door noiselessly behind me, and, candle in hand, disappeared upstairs.

"I heard the creaking of feet and the mutter of voices in consultation, then the drab came down a few steps, peeped over the banisters, and said, 'Will you come up, please.'

"I mounted to the first floor and was shown into a room, chill, shabbily furnished, and fusty. The little maid-of-all-work lighted an oil lamp that stood on a sideboard; it was strong smelling and given to smoke.

"She disappeared, and, before I had had time to look around me, flap, flap, flap, sounded in the passage, and I stood in the presence of an old lady of strange appearance.

"Her face denoted alarm. A profusion of grey hair wandered in all directions from under a cap not too clean and set on her head awry. Her arms were bare and sinewy. Her dress was a

model of untidiness, and was looped up in a way that suggested regard for the value of time rather than a studied compliance with the prevailing mode. Her boots were burst in front and burst at the sides, and at the risk of seeming indelicate I am bound to say that her stockings hung about her not too seductive legs loosely.

"At first I thought she was frightened, but I found out by degrees that fear and bewilderment were merely the normal expression of her countenance.

"‘I think you will recognise this handwriting,’ I said, giving her the paper I had received from the policeman.

"She held it up to the light and conned it attentively. It was easy to see that her scholarship was defective. It took her full three minutes to spell out some half dozen words, that really were written very plainly.

"‘Why, sir,’ she cried at last, ‘this must be Jim Richards. Why didn’t you say so at first, sir? I am sure if I can do anything for you you are heartily welcome. Jim has been a good friend to me this long while, and I am not backward to return a kindness. He and my husband that’s gone, poor dear man, was in the force together five years and more. But, sir, what can I do for you?’

"I explained the situation.

"‘Lor!’ cried the good woman, as I finished speaking, ‘only fancy; now isn’t it shocking? Oh, the things that happens in these London streets is really dreadful. Fancy the poor dear——starving, you say, and quite a lady; oh, it’s awful. Did you leave her in the cab outside? I’ll run upstairs and light the fire in the second floor front. This is a lodger’s room, sir, a party by the name of Williams, a clerk in the city, but he’s out now. He isn’t a very punctual gentleman of a night, and I am really frightened at times at the hours he keeps; I can’t help thinking he’s been robbed and murdered. And yet I say to myself it’s only one of his bachelor parties, or the theatre, or such like, but I wish he was more steady. And a nice young man too, as ever you’d wish to meet. Here, Sally, bring up a bundle of wood and a scuttle of coals. Will you fetch the lady in? We’ll make her all comfortable, depend upon it. And so Jim says he’ll look round in the morning? Well, I know he wouldn’t send me anyone he didn’t think respectable—I have to be careful, there’s such impostors abroad. And, oh my, how it’s raining. Lord-a-mercy! Did you hear that? A chimney-pot went crashing down on to the pavement. It’s awful. Fancy being out in the streets, and in such weather too! Oh, it makes one shiver, even to think of it. I and Sally will set to with the room directly; there isn’t much to be

done—it'll all be right by the time you are back with the young lady.'

"I hastened down stairs. The cabman was grumbling at the delay, and no wonder. He begged civilly enough for an addition to his fare, and I did not refuse him. To be alternately hurrying and dawdling about on such a night as that, could be pleasant neither to man nor beast.

"I opened the door of the vehicle and begged my charge to alight. She obeyed silently, and followed me into the house.

"On reaching the first floor landing the 'drab' was in readiness with the lamp and ushered us up a second flight of stairs to the room prepared for our reception.

"We entered. It was a cosy looking apartment, and the fire already was beginning to burn brightly. Mrs. Austin, the hospitable landlady, wheeled a big easy chair on to the corner of the hearthrug for the accommodation of her new lodger.

"'Lor, my dear,' exclaimed the good woman, after a scrutinizing but satisfactory glance at the stranger, 'you look quite perished. Do let me take off that wet bonnet and shawl. Oh my, they are soaked through and through. And your gown; well I never. It is a wonder you have not caught your death of cold; and how pale you look. You are quite worn out, poor dear, I can see that. But lor, you must cheer up, we'll soon have you round again. What a horrid night to be sure, and you out in all that wind and rain. Mercy me, you must be drenched. And your hair, too—like sea-weed. Here, you must have a change; come with me. A candle in my room, Sally. Do you mind waiting here a minute, sir? I shan't be gone long.'

"Mrs. Austin took her charge by the hand, and fairly dragged her from the room.

"After a short interval, she came back looking more horrified and wonder-struck than ever.

"'Oh, she's in such a state,' cried the good soul, lifting up her hands; 'her clothes mere rags, and you might wring the wet from them in bucketsful. She must have been out in the storm hours. She's crying now, and seems a bit relieved. Ah, poor thing, they've treated her shameful, I can see *that*. She's quite the lady—I can tell it from her way of speaking. And that a young creature as she is should be turned out of doors and left to shift for herself. Oh, it's shameful, but some of them landladies—well, they are flint, not flesh and blood.'

"'You don't mind taking her in for a day or two?' I interposed.







## CABINET PHOTOGRAPHS.

## XIII.—MR FORSTER AND MR. NEWDEGATE.

THOUGH Mr. Forster, now Vice-President of the Council, and in that capacity virtual Minister of Education for Great Britain, is a comparatively new man in Parliament, having sat in the House of Commons only since February 1861, there is no one amongst the junior members of the present Administration whose future is likely to surpass that which appears to lie before him. He has made for himself a most enviable position in Parliament, where he has succeeded in gaining not only the confidence of the leaders of his own party, but the esteem and respect of all his opponents. A staunch Liberal, a member of one of the most advanced, if not of *the* most advanced section of the Radical party, and a man whose unflinching devotion to his own principles does not require to be tested, he is nevertheless singularly popular amongst the Conservatives generally, and there is unquestionably no man now sitting on the Treasury Bench who can command so favourable a hearing for any measure he has to propose from both sides of the House, as the right honourable gentleman whose Rabelaisian face forms one of the features of that post of honour. We may go further than this, and say that at the present moment, after Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Lowe, there does not seem to be any one on the Liberal side of the House who would be likely a few years hence to compete with Mr. Forster for the possession of the highest post in the Administration. It is no exaggeration—it is rather the carefully-formed opinion of the ablest critics—that the member for Bradford is more likely than any other of those who are his compeers in Parliamentary standing to attain the crowning honour of the premiership. In short, Mr. Forster may be described as “the most rising man” in his party.

To what are we to attribute such a position as that which the right honourable gentleman now occupies? Not assuredly to the fact that he is connected with any of our great governing families, or has been through a long course the faithful friend and ally of some Whig statesman. There is hardly any one in the House of Commons who could lay less claim to these advantages—if they



are advantages—than Mr. Forster. He is the son of a minister of the Society of Friends, a gentleman who was distinguished during a long life by his works of practical benevolence, and who died whilst travelling on an Anti-Slavery mission in the United States. He is, it is true, the son-in-law of Dr. Arnold, but Dr. Arnold's influence, vast though it has been, has not, we need scarcely say, been in the direction of the Senate. Furthermore Mr. Forster is, or until a very recent period was, a Yorkshire mill-owner and manufacturer; his residence is in that lovely valley of the Wharf, the beauties of which Turner was so fond of studying and reproducing, and his place of business is in the crowded streets of Bradford, a town with the staple industry of which the Vice-President of the Council is intimately acquainted. It can hardly be said, therefore, that it is to any accident of birth or social influence that Mr. Forster owes the position he has gained in the political world. He is a Yorkshire mill-owner and professes to be nothing more.

Nor can it be said that it is to any remarkable gift of eloquence or of statesmanship that he is indebted for the high rank he has already taken. Mr. Forster can hardly be said to be an eloquent man. His speeches, though they are usually clear and powerful, are not adorned by any rhetorical graces, nor are they lightened by any play of imagination. They are the plain unvarnished statement of honest opinions, arrived at after a due weighing of all sides of the question upon which those opinions have had to be formed. They have nothing of the marvellous literary beauty attaching to Mr. Bright's orations, nor have they the elasticity, the grace, and the eloquence for which Mr. Gladstone's speeches are remarkable. As to Mr. Forster's claim to statesmanship, there are many persons—and we confess that we are amongst the number—who believe that when the time comes he will show that he possesses this quality to a degree of which as yet the world has no conception. But it is only common truth to state that he has gained the position which he now holds without having had the opportunity of displaying the statesmanlike powers which we fully believe are latent within him. Until he introduced the English Education Bill a few weeks ago, indeed, the House of Commons and the country had been compelled to take his statesmanship almost entirely upon trust, basing its belief in its existence upon the general character and reputation of Mr. Forster.

Nevertheless, that general character and reputation must have been a very high one ere it could have induced the House of Commons to feel so much confidence in a comparatively untried man. High it unquestionably was; and in some respects it was higher than that of almost any of his contemporaries. For before Mr.

Forster had sat many years in the House of Commons he had succeeded in establishing for himself not only a reputation for ability but for fairness. It was this eminent fairness and impartiality which did so much to gain for him that popularity which he now enjoys. His fairness was, however, something very different from the cold-blooded judicial attitude assumed by Lord Derby, or the mere veneering of suavity worn by Lord Granville. It was rather the generous fairness of an outspoken English gentleman, who feels the utmost confidence in the perfect righteousness of his own views upon any and every subject, and who is prepared to maintain those views at all costs against all comers, but who has at the same time a gentlemanly respect and even liking for honest opponents, and who is quite ready to admit that though his own views are the best, there may be something in the views of other people which deserves consideration. There is in fact a bluff and frank good-nature in the manner in which Mr. Forster deals with his opponents which does more to conquer them than torrents of declamation or the most ingeniously designed strategy. The House of Commons as a whole rejoices as much in meeting a fair and generous opponent as any individual member of the House would do, and accordingly Mr. Forster, who deals out to both sides of the House a courtesy, somewhat rough of speech it is true, but always fairly divided between both parties, finds himself one of those enviable men who are popular with everybody.

Before he had established a position for himself at St. Stephen's, however, Mr. Forster held no mean place at Bradford, of which town he was one of the Parliamentary representatives. The right honourable gentleman always speaks with something akin to enthusiasm when he mentions Bradford in the House of Commons, and Bradford returns the compliment by greeting him with overflowing enthusiasm whenever he appears in its midst for the purpose of addressing his constituents. It must be confessed that the Yorkshire borough could hardly have a more suitable representative than Mr. Forster. The strong, sturdy common sense of the people of that district, their inherent sense of fair play, their ambition, and their energy, are all fitly represented in Mr. Forster. It is a sight worth seeing when the right honourable gentleman addresses a meeting of his fellow-townsmen in St. George's Hall, and it vividly recalls to mind the triumphs enjoyed by Mr. Bright whenever he makes his appearance in the Free Trade Hall at Manchester or the Town Hall at Birmingham. It is apparent the moment Mr. Forster appears upon the platform that the most perfect confidence and mutual good-will exists between member and constituents. The latter cheer him with a heartiness which speaks volumes on behalf of the soundness of

their Liberalism and their lungs, and the former responds to the greeting he thus receives by making a speech in which he disburthens himself to his friends with a freedom and a frankness which must cause him to be the envy of more cautious statesmen. Let it not be supposed, however, that in the frankness which leads Mr. Forster to tell his constituents exactly what he thinks about the prospects of any particular policy in which his party is engaged, without regard to the consideration whether his opinions are likely to encourage his friends or the reverse, he ever falls into the mistake of saying too much. On the contrary, his very openness and frankness save him from the traps into which more cautious men are very apt to fall. Thus Mr. Forster has never been known to reveal a ministerial secret prematurely. Indeed, when he became a member of the Government he told his constituents with the utmost straightforwardness that they must not now expect him to tell them everything; that he would tell them all that he in fairness could, but that there were certain topics upon which his tongue must henceforth be tied, and that much as he would like to speak upon these topics, he could not do so. His constituents being sensible Yorkshiremen accepted this frank apology as a compliment rather than otherwise, and thus it is that Mr. Forster, though a member of the present Administration, and holding an important position in it, enjoys the delightful privilege of talking as freely as any independent member to his constituents upon most topics, and is allowed by them to say just as much or as little as he likes upon the other topics with which he is immediately concerned in his official capacity. His mode of securing this privilege by a frank confession of the disabilities under which a member of any Government necessarily labours, was a happy instance of the tact which has ever distinguished him throughout his public life.

His speeches themselves, whether made at Bradford amongst the sturdy Yorkshiremen who idolize him, or in the House of Commons to a colder and more critical audience, are always well worth studying. They are not, as we have said, eloquent after the manner of Mr. Bright's or Mr. Gladstone's eloquence; nor do they sparkle with brilliant epigrams, or with polished sarcasm like Mr. Disraeli's speeches. They are somewhat rough-hewn in shape. It is quite clear that they have been carefully thought out beforehand; but it is equally clear that they have not undergone the polishing process which results in that highest form of oration in which every thought which the speaker intends to express is conveyed in the clearest and at the same time in the most beautiful language. Nevertheless these speeches are always remarkable for their lucidity; for the freshness and originality of the views which



they contain, for their vigorous and racy comment upon the passing events of the day, for their clever and comprehensive forecast of future events, and for their spirit of courtesy and fairness towards all who are the speaker's political opponents. Gradually the merits of Mr. Forster's Bradford speeches have become more and more apparent to the world at a distance; gradually they have received a larger and yet larger amount of attention on the part of metropolitan critics and the general public, until it has at last come to be admitted that there are not many reviews of the political events of the day better worth listening to, and certainly not many from which more can be learned, than those which Mr. Forster periodically delivers in the town which he represents in Parliament. As to his speeches in the House of Commons, they have, up to a comparatively recent period, been speeches from which it was impossible to augur much. They have always been favourably received, and have always deserved the attention bestowed upon them; but a subordinate member of an administration, or an independent member, unless he holds a high rank in the House, has not many chances of distinguishing himself as a speaker. At the present moment, however, it happens that Mr. Forster occupies the most prominent place in the Ministry next to the prime minister. Whilst Mr. Gladstone has undertaken the charge of the Irish Land Bill, and is pushing it through Committee with varying success, Mr. Forster has charge of the other great measure of the Session, the Education Bill. As yet the battle of education has hardly commenced in the House of Commons. The first notes of the fray were sounded when the late discussion on the second reading of the bill and Mr. Dixon's amendment took place. That, however, was only a preliminary skirmish, and both armies are at this moment gathering up their strength for the struggle which still lies before them. But, so far as they have proceeded, the education debates of the present session have unquestionably tended to the increase of Mr. Forster's reputation, and to the justification of those who believe—in opposition to the opinion of a well-known cabinet minister—that he is *not* “a greatly over-rated man.” His speech in introducing the measure was itself a master-piece of clear and persuasive exposition. It followed but a few days after that wonderful address in which Mr. Gladstone made the intricacies of the Irish Land Bill as simple and intelligible as the Multiplication Table. Most men would have shrunk nervously from the comparison which could not fail to be suggested under the circumstances between the two speeches. Mr. Forster was not free from the nervousness; but he nevertheless gave no chance to the most invidious critics to draw odious comparisons between himself and Mr. Gladstone. Without making the slightest

attempt to secure oratorical effect, he quietly and deliberately stated to the House the provisions of his bill in language which nobody could misunderstand. When he sat down it seemed that he had achieved one of the greatest Parliamentary triumphs of modern times. Everybody was captivated by his exposition of the measure, and on the one side of the House leading members of the Conservative party, and on the other influential Radicals, joined in congratulating Mr. Forster upon the masterly manner in which he had solved the great problem of the day. We know that since then some at least have seen fit to alter their opinions, and that the views taken by a section of the Liberals with regard to Mr. Forster's bill have been considerably modified under pressure from without. Still that does not alter the fact that in the first instance his proposals were hailed as the most successful attempt to settle the educational difficulty which had ever been made, and that the speech in which those proposals were stated was of itself a model of lucid and simple exposition. Since that time, Mr. Forster, though he has been assailed with unaccountable bitterness by one section of the Dissenting public, has held his ground in an admirable manner, and has increased rather than diminished the reputation which he previously enjoyed. Whether the Education Bill does or does not become law this session, nobody who has studied the measure itself, or who has watched its progress through the House of Commons, will feel inclined to doubt Mr. Forster's claim to a masterly sagacity and foresight, as evidenced in its provisions and in the arguments by which those provisions have been supported. He has conducted the preliminary skirmishes on the question with tact, temper and discretion; and it can hardly be doubted that he will show the same qualities when the battle begins in right earnest.

As for Mr. Forster's future, the more his present position is studied the more brilliant will that future seem. The House of Commons has the warmest regard for the strong-minded Yorkshire member, who can combine the most perfect fairness to his opponents with the most earnest attachment to the principles which he himself professes, and who has never during his Parliamentary career made a single unnecessary enemy. Though there is some difference at present between the Vice-President of the Council and the more extreme members of the Radical party, the links which bind them together are too strong easily to be severed; and there seems no reason to doubt that when the present breeze has blown over, Mr. Forster and the Radicals will once more work together in unabated harmony. We cannot feel any doubt as to the certainty of his receiving the post of Minister of Education, with a seat in the Cabinet, should the present bill pass into law.

If this were to be so, there is no one even among those most bitterly opposed to the measure now before Parliament, who would attempt to dispute the fact that upon the whole Mr. Forster is the very best educational minister we could have. The entire freedom from sectarian prejudices which has long distinguished him; the fairness with which he is in the habit of acting towards the members of all creeds and parties, and the admirable common sense, the readiness of resource, and the fertility of invention, which are among his characteristics, all point him out as being above most men suitable for the post for which he is now designated. When we consider that he is also most enthusiastically devoted to the cause of National Education, and that by his early training and habits, he has been brought much in contact with the labouring poor, and has acquired a practical knowledge of their wants and wishes, we cannot but feel that he is destined to make one of the very best Ministers of Education we can ever hope to have. It is seldom, indeed, that by training, by sympathy, by experience, and by the peculiar bent of his powers, any man is so admirably fitted for a post in the service of the public as Mr. Forster is for that to which it is probable that he will ere long be called.

But it must not be supposed that Mr. Forster's career is likely to stop short with his appointment to the place of Educational Minister. No one who knows the right hon. gentleman can doubt that his ambition goes much further than to any post of this sort. He feels within himself the capacity for even higher things than those which would occupy his attention as Minister of Education, and we believe that he does not exaggerate his own powers when he aims—as he obviously does—at a much higher position. There seems to be no reason why Mr. Forster should not be the Liberal leader of the future. Compared with most of the men who might compete with him for the possession of that honour, he has on his side the crowning advantages of comparative youth and of popularity. He is still in the very prime of life, and he has succeeded in winning for himself a foremost place in the esteem and confidence of all parties in the House of Commons. Under these circumstances we are convinced that we cherish no rash confidence when we express our belief that if he is spared, the right hon. gentleman who now represents Bradford in the House of Commons will become Prime Minister of England. There is most assuredly no one in his own rank in Parliament whose chances of obtaining that distinction would be preferred to his. Much of course depends upon himself; but, judging by the past, we see no reason why in that future day when those who are now at the head of affairs have departed, Mr. Forster



should not appear as the leader of the new generation, and should enter upon a far higher career of statesmanship than any which he has yet attempted. Even as it is, however, he deserves our attention as a thoroughly noticeable man—one of the most noticeable, indeed, of those who are now seated upon the Treasury Bench.

Mr. Newdegate holds a curious position in the House of Commons. It is one which it would be impossible to define in a single sentence, and to which even in much more extended limits it is difficult to do justice. He is the Protestant champion. All the world is acquainted with that fact, and all England knows what labours he has undertaken in the cause of that Church of which he is so devoted a member. But unfortunately the title of Protestant Champion belongs to many men of very different character and calibre to Mr. Newdegate. Take, for instance, that other Protestant champion of the House of Commons, Mr. Whalley. We do not go so far as the unkind people who solemnly declared their conviction that Mr. Whalley was a Jesuit in disguise, though we must acknowledge that we have known of no Jesuits who have done more harm to the cause of orthodox Protestantism than that which has been done to that cause by the erratic member for Peterborough. No one who has seen the exhibitions which this hon. gentleman is in the habit of making in the House of Commons, the curious compound of ideas which he appears to entertain, and the extravagant manner in which he supports any of the claims he may feel it his duty to advance, can fail to acknowledge that if he is a fair type of the Protestant champions, then the fewer persons of that order there are in the world the better will it be for Protestantism. There is again the Protestant Champion of the type to be met with occasionally in Scotland—gentlemen of the class which supports the *Bulwark*—who would apparently, if they were allowed to have their own way in the matter, find exquisite pleasure in retaliating upon all Roman Catholics those tortures and punishments which in less happy days the Protestants of the United Kingdom had to suffer at the hands of their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. There are other Protestant champions still lower in grade than these,—men to whom it is unnecessary that we should allude by name, but who manage to support the claims of Protestantism at the expense of those of morality and of common decency. But it is to none of these orders that Mr. Newdegate belongs. There is no more earnest or enthusiastic Protestant in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless Mr. Newdegate would not desire to launch torrents of Billingsgate at the head of any Catholic member who ventured to oppose him; nor would he wish

to see that member dragged forthwith into New Palace Yard and there given to the flames; nor, above all, would he like to treat the House of Commons to a course of instruction in the "Confessional Unmasked," or in any other work of an equally edifying nature.

Mr. Newdegate, in short, is a Protestant and a Protestant champion, but he is at the same time a gentleman, and he never forgets that there is a right and a wrong way of doing all things, and that the right way is that which it is in every sense wiser to adopt. Accordingly, although he occasionally deals very hard blows at his Roman Catholic fellow-members in the House, and at his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen generally, he is yet remarkably successful in retaining the respect of all men. Even hot-blooded Irish gentlemen, roused to a state of fever-heat by what they consider an insult to their religion, will go out of their way to express their conviction that Mr. Newdegate is personally an amiable and excellent man, and that in what he is doing he is actuated by the best of motives, whilst by the House at large, though he may not find his views very generally sympathized with, Mr. Newdegate always carries with him a certain amount of weight which only attaches to men who have earned the esteem of Parliament by the strictest personal honour and consistency.

We do not pretend to say that Mr. Newdegate always takes the wisest course in his proceedings with respect to Romanism. On the contrary, even those who are as staunchly attached to the Protestant Church as he himself is, but who have succeeded in keeping free from the turbid currents of theological controversy, are often grieved by the lengths to which he pushes his antagonism to Rome. But it is at least certain that in all that he does he acts up to the very letter of his own view of what is honourable; and that even in the fiercest moments of debate, when those religious passions are roused which burn more fiercely and are more difficult to quench than any other passions, he never permits himself to use language which is not strictly gentlemanly towards his opponent.

There is something about Mr. Newdegate's manner when speaking so strangely formal and solemn that it has acquired for him a peculiar fame in the House of Commons. To begin with, although Mr. Newdegate is in private life a most genial gentleman, and although he is known and admired in the Midland counties more as a devoted fox-hunter than as the champion of Protestantism, he seems to think it right to assume a most funereal air whenever he enters the House of Commons. His face as a rule wears so lugubrious an air that the title of Knight of the Doleful Countenance has been applied to him with singular appropriateness; and when he

speaks his voice is suggestive of a reading from the Burial Service rather than of any more enlivening piece of elocution. Despite these serious drawbacks, the hon. gentleman is not without a keen sense of the humorous, and he is frequently in the habit of giving utterance to sly pieces of humour, which are made all the more irresistible by the speaker's solemn face and tone.

Mr. Newdegate adopts a stately as well as a solemn style when he addresses the House. The *Saturday Review* observed the other day that he was the last man who maintained the traditions of the style of the elocution-master, and it must be confessed that there is some truth in the statement. The carefully modulated voice, the scrupulously appropriate gestures, and the gathering climax of the peroration, all call to mind the orators of a past day. Mr. Newdegate must have studied those orators carefully when he was a youth, for he succeeds in producing in the House of Commons in 1870 an exact copy of the style of oratory which was universally adopted in Parliament forty years ago.

Few things are more amusing than to watch the hon. gentleman when he is engaged in a hot controversy with some Irish members upon some questions connected with his favourite, his all-absorbing theme. There is something almost pathetic in the pitying patience with which he allows his opponent not only to speak without interruption from himself, but to interrupt him when it is his turn to address the House. The consciousness of undoubted right is printed upon every feature of his subdued and solemn face, as he courteously gives way in order to allow some gentleman opposite to make an explanation which he has no right whatever to offer to the House. He evidently regards his opponent more in sorrow than in anger, and feels for him rather as the misguided dupe of mischievous delusions than as being anything more objectionable.

There is but one person in the House of Commons for whom Mr. Newdegate entertains a less charitable feeling. That person is the redoubtable Mr. Whalley. Few men who were present in the House during the session of 1869, when that famous scene of mutual accusation and recrimination took place between the member for North Warwickshire and the member for Peterborough, will forget the incident. It is true that the House treated the affair as an exquisite joke, and watched its progress amidst shouts of laughter. But it was at Mr. Whalley and not at Mr. Newdegate that it laughed. For the latter, indeed, no one could feel anything but pity, and few things were in their way more pathetic than the manner in which he taxed Mr. Whalley with having done his best to destroy the very cause which he professed to be anxious to promote. It was Mr. Whalley's thick-skinned insensibility to



the shafts of Mr. Newdegate's satire which roused the laughter of the House, and led to a scene which has not had many parallels in Parliament. Up to that time the twin champions of Protestants had been cold strangers, ever since they have been open foes.

A few weeks ago it was Mr. Newdegate's lot to win a most unexpected victory. He had given notice so far back as last session, of his intention to move for the appointment of a committee to enquire into the condition of conventual institutions in Great Britain. When the night came on which that motion was to be brought before the House, he was allowed to bring it to the vote almost unopposed, for apparently all the members of the Roman Catholic party were satisfied with the assurance that the Government intended to oppose the motion on its own account. Strange to say, however, the Ministry was put into a minority, the whips not having calculated upon the strength of the Protestant feeling on their own side of the House. It was strange to see how Mr. Newdegate's face flushed with delight when he found that after years of discouragement and defeat he had at last obtained a substantial triumph. Equally pleasant was it to see the manner in which he responded to the warm congratulations he received from his friends near him when he resumed his seat. He had achieved a victory of no mean description, and he must have felt that after all the exertions of his life had not been in vain.

It is not everybody that has Mr. Newdegate's earnestness of feeling with regard to ecclesiastical matters, and there are doubtless many persons who will view his excess of zeal with disapprobation rather than otherwise; nevertheless, all must admit that if a Protestant champion is a desirable functionary in the House of Commons—and who will deny that proposition?—we could hardly have that position better filled than it is by the member for North Warwickshire.

## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

### CHAPTER II.

#### LAURA.

FAR away from the noise and bustle of town; far away, too, from the pleasant midland vale in the midst of which lies Lumley Park, on the edge of a brown moor that stretches for miles along the high borderland of Lancashire and Yorkshire, there stands a grey old stone house which was for centuries the home of the Edelstones of Burniston. The house stood there, weather-beaten and time-worn, long before Burniston had arrived at the corporate dignity which it has since achieved; it was the home of the Edelstons, indeed, when Burniston was but a village of one long straggling street without any specific industry of its own. Times have changed since then, and Burniston has changed with them. Instead of the one white-washed public-house, where the village gossips foregathered in the evenings of their listless idle days, and discussed in turn the deeds and misdeeds of every dweller within the precincts of the place, half-a-dozen "hotels" of high-sounding names and imposing exterior now proudly lift their heads in the midst of the town, and offer more or less limited accommodation to the commercial travellers, the American merchants, and the stray tourists, who are the sole visitors to the town. Instead of the humble cottages where the shuttles of the weavers were heard merrily rattling from morning till night, there are now a score of giant mills wherein the whirr of the machinery never seems to cease, and the atmosphere around seems ever to be flavoured with oil, and laden with the fine dust of the unwoven cotton. Burniston, in short, has spread and extended itself, until instead of being the mere village nestling beneath the shadow of the Eaves House, it has become the busy, prosperous manufacturing town, with its churches and chapels, its Mechanics' Institution, and its banks, its mayor and aldermen. You need not be surprised, therefore, to hear that the Burniston "folk" are accustomed to recall with no little pride the comparatively rapid advance their town has made from obscurity and insignificance to fame and importance.

And whilst the times have thus changed with Burniston, there

have been changes also at the Eaves House, where for centuries the Edelstons had their home. Mention has already been made in this history of these Edelstons ; and it has been told how Charles Harcourt, when "a rising young man," won the young lady who was the last of the goodly line, and in whose hands lay the possessions of the family. Thus it had come to pass that the Eaves House was no longer the home of a family bearing the name of the Edelstons, but had become instead the home of the family of Charles Harcourt and his wife.

The Edelstons had for generations been celebrated for two things—the strength of their men and the beauty of their women. The men had not been, as a rule, distinguished for anything but their strength and their skill in all manner of manly sports. They had never been great at Quarter Sessions ; the long roll of the family pedigree did not contain the name of one Edelston who had ever served his county by representing it in Parliament ; no one bearing the name had ever written a book, or painted a picture, or done anything to achieve distinction in the world lying beyond the limits of Lancashire. But within those limits hardly any name was better known than that which these men bore ; and no gathering for sport or pleasure in the county was considered complete without the presence of one or other of the stalwart sons of Anak who represented the house in each successive generation. And if the men of the family were first in the hunting-field, and in less reputable places where the Lancastrian squires of former days found what they conceived to be excellent sport, the women enjoyed a yet more undisputed pre-eminence in the ball-room. Indeed, if the legends, which everybody who knows the county must have heard, have any degree of truth in them, the beauty of the female Edelstons must have been in every way remarkable.

It is not with the beauty of any past member of the family, however, that we have now to deal. If you go to Burniston and think it worth your while to apply for permission to visit the Eaves House, you will be shown on the walls of the long picture gallery, the portraits of a score of ladies, young and fair, who were once the toast of the county, and who in their day have given numberless heart-aches to the gallant gentlemen of Lancashire. There they are, preserved upon the faded canvasses, and as you pass them in review you see bright eyes, and red lips, and blooming cheeks, and luxuriant masses of that rich brown hair of which all the female Edelstons have been so proud. But, alas ! those charms have long ago been turned to something else, by no means so charming. I could preach a sermon on any one of these goodly pictures, upon which the eye loves to linger, but it is a sermon which would have for its emblem the grinning death's-head, and for its moral, the



old, old story, "vanity of vanities." They have gone; these sprightly dames, who in turn made the somewhat gloomy rooms of the Eaves House bright with the sunshine of their presence; they have gone out from amongst us into the land of darkness; and nothing remains now of the beauty for which they were once so famous, but these poor painted records, and the legends attaching to them.

Surely the havoc which death makes with beauty, is more terrible than any other of its ravages. Virtue, we know, will bloom elsewhere, and will retain its ever-fragrant charm "when the whole world turns to a coal"; learning and wit, genius and goodness—these things belong to the inner man, and like the inner man can never die; whilst every bleeding heart knows for itself that love is but made fuller, purer, and more complete by the touch of death's sharp arrow. But beauty—what becomes of those sparkling eyes and blooming cheeks in the Silent Land? Can we hope that this quality, which is utterly and entirely material, and which is yet so precious to us in this material world, will be preserved or enhanced beyond the grave? Alas! the most perishable of all our gifts is this we prize so highly; and one has but to conjure up a vision of the return of these famous beauties of bygone days to the places which they once adorned, in order to grasp the truth that though charming faces and graceful figures may play no little part in the drama of life during their day, that day is but a brief one, and once past, can never be recalled.

Yet what would each succeeding generation be without this boon of beauty? And what would be thought of the story-teller who ventured to exclude this rare though fleeting gift from the record he unfolds? So, though there is in the Eaves House a whole gallery of fair faces, long all turned to dust, to warn us that nothing flies so fast as personal charms, we turn away from the pictures untouched by the lesson which they teach us, to the fair living picture which has taken the place of the ladies who are thus portrayed in the rooms and gardens of the old hall. And an exceedingly fair picture it is. Do you remember how poor Thackeray tells us, plaintively, that he had been compelled to dismiss the artist he had hitherto employed, because he was unable to sketch the sweet face of Ethel Newcome to his satisfaction? Thackeray's pen, however, did that which his pencil refused to do, and he added one of the fairest and most charming of portraits to the long, long gallery of women who have sprung full-grown from the brain of genius. For my part, I lay down my pen in despair when I try to bring Laura Harcourt, the living representative of all these beauties of the past of whom I have been speaking, before the reader's eye. I cannot catch the subtle charm which clings to her bright young

face, nor can I analyse the features which as a whole made her even as a child, the admiration of all who had ever seen her. What I can say is, that her hair was of a warm brown hue which turned to gold in the sunshine; and that her complexion was at once the clearest and most brilliant I ever saw; but eyes and nose and mouth are details which I decline to touch with my coarse brush. Were they æsthetically perfect? I suppose not; but I cannot pretend to say. I only know that from the time when she was a slim maid of fifteen, men, old and young alike, used to find that they could not see her without succumbing to the fascination of her beauty. Grave veterans who had long ago passed the age at which they could become any woman's slave, nevertheless enshrined the bright face, with its matchless charms, in their inmost hearts, and thought regretfully of the time when they were not grey-bearded, and when they too might have entered the lists in competition for the wonderful prize which dazzled their eyes; whilst younger men raved, or quarrelled, or "spooned," according to their nature, after a single glimpse of the face which was now the great charm of the Eaves House. You and I, excellent reader, being free from the fascination of Miss Laura's beauty, can afford to smile at the infatuation of those who thus succumbed to it, and can moralize calmly over the inevitable fate which sooner or later must befall her charms.

I know that in many excellent minds—chiefly if not solely feminine minds—there is a prejudice against all young ladies whose lot it is to attract the general admiration of mankind. Nevertheless I want you to believe that Miss Laura Harcourt, whatever she might be as a woman, and that is a point upon which these pages will hereafter enlighten you, was as a child a very sweet and loveable creature. The Eaves House was her home, for in those early days her father, who was the guardian rather than the possessor of his wife's fortune, did not permit himself the luxury of a town house, and his wife preferred the quiet and peace of her Lancashire home to the bustle and turmoil of Belgravia. So, except the four weeks' visit to London in June, Mrs. Harcourt remained at home with her family. That family consisted of three stalwart lads, who had the Edelston strength and who were in addition blessed with the promise of intellectual powers of which few of the Edelstons could have boasted; and of Laura, the fairest of all the fair members of her mother's family.

Mr. Harcourt was a Liberal, one of the leading members of the Liberal party of the day; but his daughter was one of the most decided Conservatives with whom it was possible to meet in a summer day's journey. She had been brought up at the Eaves House; she knew little of London, and what little she did know

of it she disliked ; for the delights of the Zoological Gardens and the park, were not counterbalanced by the miseries of the enforced absence from her favourite pets at home, and the bustle and noise of Piccadilly and Regent Street. Moreover, as a very young lady indeed, she had imbibed the idea that the people of Lancashire in general, and of Burniston in particular, were, after all, the best specimens of the human race with whom it was possible to come in contact. No speech, to her mind was so sweet, as the rough dialect of Burniston ; no faces bore so unmistakably the impress of the excellent virtues of prudence and honesty, and straightforwardness, as Burniston faces ; and no manners and customs were so unmistakably ordained by a superior power as those manners and customs which flourished in the immediate neighbourhood of the Eaves House.

So it happened that Laura spent her early days in a fool's paradise of contentment. She was perfectly satisfied with life as it was ; she wished for no home but the old stone house where she had spent her childhood ; for no people, but the people of the district which was so familiar to her ; and for no habits, or ways of speech or life, but those to which she had been accustomed from her infancy. Look back, good reader, to your own youth, and see whether in your childhood you were not blessed with an equal contentment and an equal faith in the surpassing virtues of everybody and everything in any way connected with your life.

But of course this paradise was not without its drawbacks. Was there ever a paradise that was ? In this particular case the thorn that lurked beneath the rose was furnished by that amiable young gentleman, Gerald Lumley, whose acquaintance we have already had the pleasure of making.

When Gerald was quite a boy he became a frequent visitor at the Eaves House, and, sad to say, he was the author of very fruitful discord whilst there. It was not of course surprising that he should quarrel with the boys. The male Harcourts thought Gerald a mixture of the milksop and the tiger ; and, with the delightful disingenuousness of youth, they made no effort to conceal their opinion. When young Lumley came to the Eaves House therefore, as he generally did at least once a year, his arrival was the signal for the commencement of civil war in the gardens and grounds of that peaceful mansion ; and during the whole time of his visit, he and Jasper, and Tom, and Charley, the three sons of Mr. Harcourt, were engaged in fierce rivalry in those athletic games to which all were devoted. But boys are not worse friends as a rule because they occasionally quarrel. The case is different, however, when it is a quarrel between a boy and a girl. For not a few years Gerald was the torment of Laura's life. He



it was who came into the midst of the little paradise of self-content in which she had installed herself, and rudely disturbed her satisfaction by his captious criticisms upon the very customs and circumstances on which she most prided herself. He it was who assailed her pet theories and prejudices with the rude vigour of youth, and instilled into her mind those dreadful doubts as to the absolute perfection of Burniston folk and Burniston ways, which once implanted there it was difficult to get rid of. For years the young lady hated the lad, who was a few months her junior, with a hatred the description of which would I fear shock Mrs. Grundy; and for years, it must be added, Master Gerald fully reciprocated this pleasing sentiment, and regarded Laura as a very disagreeable girl indeed.

But in due course of time there came over the mind of young Lumley a change. How it came about I do not pretend to say; still less shall I attempt to describe the various stages which he passed through whilst undergoing this change. Does my reader know what it is to have been in love at the mature age of twelve? If he does not, if he has never tossed on his little bed, burning with hope, fear, rage, jealousy, at a time when he ought to have been asleep, dreaming of marbles and sweetstuff, then he cannot understand the processes of Gerald's mind at this period of his life, and he would utterly fail in comprehending how it was, or why it was that the child, whilst he continued to be as wayward, as passionate and as disagreeable as ever with all the rest of the world, became suddenly amiable and gentle with Laura.

Did Laura detect this change; and, if so, did she feel gratified by it? Who that knows anything about women will feel any hesitation in answering both these questions in the affirmative? Young as she was, Laura still belonged to that sex which has never failed to detect the evidences of incipient love on the part of one of the opposite sex, and has never failed to feel to a certain extent flattered and gratified by that love, however little she might be inclined to reciprocate it. The young lady, therefore, who reigned supreme mistress at the Eaves House, having from her earliest years exercised a mild despotism over the hearts of her father and mother, could hardly fail, even though she was still a child, to perceive and to understand the change which came over Gerald's manner, and which made him in her presence one of the gentlest and most amiable of mortals.

It was when Laura was thirteen years of age, and Gerald was just advancing towards the same period in life, that the scene which I am about to describe took place.

"Here's a lark," cried Tom Harcourt, bursting into the room where his brothers were enjoying themselves one day during the

summer vacation, when Gerald was visiting at the Eaves House. "Here's a lark! What do you think, Jasper? if I didn't catch Gerald trying to kiss Laura in the shrubbery!"

"Gerald Lumley trying to kiss Laura! What a piece of confounded impudence! But you didn't let him, Tom?" said Jasper, with the severe dignity of an eldest son.

"Let him? Of course I didn't. I heard him ask her if he might give her a kiss, and I gave a screech that made 'em both jump like cats; and let them see that I was watching, and then I came off as hard as I could to tell you."

Tom paused and looked round him with the satisfied self-consciousness of one who has done a decidedly meritorious action.

"I'll tell you what it is, Tom; this can't be permitted. My father's away, but I won't have my sister kissed by that fellow. He must be called to account for this. I'm too big to fight him myself; but you can fight him, Tom, and you must do it at once."

"All right," was the ready response of the young gentleman who was thus called upon to maintain the honour of the family. "We'll have it out this afternoon, behind the stables."

In the meantime another scene was taking place in the shrubbery. There Gerald, who in a moment of impulse had ventured to prefer the petition overheard by Tom, was paying the penalty of his folly.

"There now, Gerald Lumley, see what you've done," exclaimed Laura, half-crying with shame and vexation, when Tom had yelled out and disappeared as he himself described. "Everybody will know what you've said to me, you naughty boy. I hate you! I believe I do."

Poor Gerald, with a face still scarlet with the sudden blush that had suffused it upon his detection, ventured to falter out a request that Laura would not hate him altogether.

"Well, if I don't hate you, it's more than you deserve. Never speak to me in that way again, sir. Do you hear me? never!" And the young beauty stamped her foot imperiously on the ground.

"Oh! Laura, I'll never do it again, if you only won't hate me."

He looked so miserable as he spoke, that Laura's heart softened.

"Well, be sure that you are a good boy for the future, and then perhaps I'll forgive you," and, leaving this gleam of hope behind, Laura turned to the house.

That afternoon fierce battle was waged between Tom and

Gerald behind the stables ; and Gerald's face bore unpleasant evidences of the encounter for some days afterwards.

Did Laura notice these "glorious scars," and feel a proper pity for the unhappy wight who had sustained them in his love for her ? I know not. I only know that after that she treated Gerald more distantly than she had done ; and yet at times she awarded him looks and smiles which filled his young heart with happiness, and more than reconciled him to the jeers and scoffs to which he had to submit whilst in the company of her brothers.

But the time came at length when Laura's life was no longer to be lived exclusively amongst Lancashire mills and moors. Her father, when he had advanced so far in political life as to become one of the Secretaries of State, took a town house in Eaton Square, and there henceforward his wife and family spent each season. Presently, therefore, Laura began to find that London was not after all so intolerable as she had once believed it to be, and though she still yearned after the peace and quiet of her northern home, she found not a little in the great Babylon to occupy her attention. In due time she "came out." When she did so, even those who had prophesied the most glowing things of the brilliant future which the young beauty had before her were hardly prepared to see how completely their predictions were realized. The happy laughter of her childhood no longer rippled incessantly from her lips ; the round full face with which Gerald had fallen in love was oval now ; the lips closed more firmly than they used to do, only parting at the rare moments when she smiled ; the rich dark hair was no longer allowed to hang in luxuriant locks about her shoulders. The little girl had become a woman, somewhat precocious in the maturity of thought and sentiment which marked her, and appearing in consequence to be older than she really was, but full at the same time of the true womanliness which never ages, the tenderness of heart and the loyalty of spirit, having which the most venerable of women can still retain the love [and homage of all about her, and lacking which the youngest and purest of her sex becomes—a girl of the period !

During these years of transition, Laura did not see very much of Gerald. Even in the ordinary course of events a girl reaches comparative maturity much earlier than a boy. In Laura's case, therefore, the few months of difference between their ages which had not seemed so much when they were children together at the Eaves House, had now become a great barrier between her and Gerald. At seventeen he was a boy ; and she was a young lady enjoying the pleasures of her first season, and the triumph of having all society at her feet ; for all London was ready to acknow-



ledge that Miss Harcourt was the belle of the season, and that amongst the many beautiful girls who had been brought out that year, none could hold a candle to the daughter of the — Secretary.

What sympathy could one expect to find between a young lady who had taken a place, and not a mean one, in London society, who had received and refused offers, and been courted and flattered by some of the most famous and powerful men in England, and a boy who was still in the hands of a private tutor? In the case of most young ladies no sympathy whatever. In the case of Laura Harcourt however, it seemed as though the greater the distance became which separated her from the boy with whom she had played and quarrelled in her early childhood, the deeper became the sympathy which existed between them. For the old life at the Eaves House seemed dearer and brighter to her than it had ever done before during her first experience of Belgravian ball-rooms, and all who were associated in her mind with that life seemed infinitely nearer to her than any of the new friends of the great world with whom she was brought in contact. So when Sir George Lumley brought his son up to town during that same season, and the lad was invited to one or two of the great balls at which Laura took a prominent part, many a man about town envied the cub who seemed at all times able to secure a place by the young beauty's side, for whom she always had smiles and bright eyes, and who alone was never dismissed with one of the sparkling sarcasms for which, young as she was, Miss Laura Harcourt was already becoming famous.

A man of the world would have known what the meaning of Laura's kindness was, and would not have built any very strong hopes upon it. But Gerald Lumley was still enough of a boy to imagine that what Laura meant as mere sisterly kindness really indicated something more. Sisterly kindness on the part of a young lady for a young gentleman, even though the latter be younger than herself, is never a very safe experiment in which to indulge. It may not hurt the fair creature who aspires to the part of amateur sister and confidante, but it very often indeed has serious effects upon the victim of this misplaced affection. Gerald was no exception to the rule. Self-willed and self-indulgent in everything else, he was not disposed to place any restraint upon his passions in a case in which they were so deeply involved as in his love for his quondam playfellow, and he accordingly rushed blindly into love with her now that he saw her as the finished young lady, just as he had rushed into love with her years ago when she was a little girl in short dresses at the Eaves House. He hung about the Harcourts' house in Eaton Square, until the

young brothers of the family, who had by no means retained a very strong affection for the spoiled lad, came to regard him as rather a nuisance than anything else, and even Mrs. Harcourt began to feel uneasy as to the results of his intimacy with her daughter.

She was not a match-making mother; and she had no fear of any catastrophe such as that which would have been involved in Laura's falling in love with Gerald; but she had, at the same time, no desire that the boy, who in the eyes of the world was a mere boy in comparison with her daughter, should be made miserable by an attachment which could never lead to anything in the shape of marriage.

She was well-advised in feeling that Laura's wider experience of the world, and different training, would prevent her feeling anything more than a sisterly interest in young Lumley. Laura looked upon him as a young, a very young brother; and, on the strength of her second season, and the fact that she had received and refused an offer from Lord Cheverley, a nobleman who was universally acknowledged to be the youngest old man in the House of Peers, assumed an air of almost maternal patronage and friendliness towards Gerald, which that amiable youth would not have been slow to resent in anybody else, but the real character of which he altogether failed to perceive in her case. If Laura had been a little wiser than she was, she would have learnt two things, —first, that however innocent such a bearing on her part was, it might have fatal effects upon Gerald; and, in the second place, that nothing is easier than for pure sisterly affection to develope, gradually and unsuspected, into affection of quite a different kind.

But the young lady in whose fortunes I would fain interest the reader, was saved the trouble of finding that she had imperceptibly glided into love with her old playfellow by a very simple incident. She might have fallen in love with him, and then this history would hardly have needed to be written; but she did not do so because some one else appeared upon the scene, who supplanted Gerald, and gave her something else to think about than the cultivation of this sisterly affection for the wayward lad whom she had once positively detested, and whom it was but recently that she had begun to like.

Captain Arthur Lumley came back from India; came back with a reputation gained in some of the hardest battles of the mutiny years, the deadliest struggles with the wild beasts of Delhi and Lucknow; came back too, with the handsomest and freshest face that had been seen in a London drawing-room for many a year; with a complexion which even Indian suns had failed to tan, with the gayest smile, the most musical voice, the most winning ways that had ever given graciousness to a soldier's reputation.

Many a young lady straightway fell in love with the gallant captain, and many a mamma was made anxious by his attentions to her daughter. As a man, Captain Lumley might be unexceptionable, but, as a husband, he was anything but desirable.

Laura was not one to fall blindly in love with Captain Lumley's good looks and fascinating manner. Just at first, indeed, when Gerald made his cousin known to her, she disliked him rather than otherwise. She preferred diamonds in the rough to diamonds cut and polished and many-faced; and she would rather have the rude speech and impulsive manner of a boy like her old playfellow, than the bland attentions of the most exquisite of the fine gentlemen who lounged in London drawing-rooms in the year 1861.

But no one could very long resist Captain Lumley's bright smile and winning speech; and Laura, after one faint struggle against the charms of the gallant hero of the mutiny, succumbed as other young ladies had done. She learnt to blush when he made a morning call in Eaton Square, and she found that her tongue was somehow not so ready to utter those sallies of wit for which she had established a reputation, when it was Arthur Lumley who provoked them. But the innocent young lady of nineteen (and she was at least as innocent as most girls of her age) admitted to nobody, not even to herself, that she felt any very tender interest in the captain's fortunes. She liked him as a pleasant companion, she found that it was very agreeable to receive the respectful homage which he was always ready to offer, but which was always saved from becoming too serious by the almost boyish gaiety of his manner; and yet she assured herself day after day that she was not in love with Arthur Lumley, and that it was her mission, her destiny, her fate, to make that grand alliance which, as the only daughter of a great statesman, she felt was expected of her.

So even Gerald's jealous eyes were deceived; and though his old temper began to show itself once or twice when he saw the ease with which his cousin made himself at home in Eaton Square and became the intimate friend of the family and the favourite of everyone, his suspicions never went so far as to lead him to the belief that Laura entertained any warmer feeling than that of mere friendship for Arthur; and he went on loving her with the blind devotion of first-love,—that love which so often has more of pain than of pleasure about it.

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The same June evening upon which we saw the cousins riding in the park and Sir George Lumley engaged in his study, had darkened into a summer night,—one of those soft and balmy summer nights when under the tender stars even London streets and squares become picturesque and in some instances positively beautiful. It was not, one would have thought, a night upon



which any one who could have been otherwise engaged would have cared to be squeezed into a London drawing-room, or wedged in a corner of the staircase at the top of which stands my lady waiting to receive her guests, one half of whom she hardly knows by sight, and for not one fourth of whom she cares a straw. Nevertheless it is upon these sweet summer evenings that good society delights in congregating in the largest possible numbers in blazing hot London drawing-rooms, and in there exercising itself violently in an atmosphere which would compare unfavourably with that of the Black Hole of Calcutta.

The reception rooms of the house in Eaton Square are crammed to-night, for all the world likes to be present at Mrs. Harcourt's evening parties, which society declares are made rather pleasanter than such gatherings in general by the judicious manner in which the company is selected, the blending of fashion and politics, and the slight, the very slight, addition of the literary and artistic element, which just serves to make Mrs. Harcourt's assembly somewhat different to those of most other ladies.

"You don't really mean that you know nobody, Captain Lumley. I suppose it must be taken as a figure of speech?" It is Miss Harcourt who utters these words as the Captain leads her to a seat after a galop which has left Laura somewhat short of breath but with a still brighter complexion than usual.

"I really mean that I know hardly any one, Miss Harcourt. You know I've been away for years, and before I went out I hadn't many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the world. You must forgive my ignorance, and if you will pity it also I shall be all the more grateful to you."

"Ah! you have been better employed than in making the acquaintance of society," is the response of the girl, and as she speaks there is a softening of the eye and a lowering of the voice very pleasant but very dangerous withal to the fortunate being who for the moment is her partner.

"You must rest, Miss Harcourt, after that galop; and it is almost as warm here as we had it out in the East: supposing you sit near the window for a few minutes, and then perhaps you will tell me who the people worth knowing are."

"Oh, I should be delighted to do that; but I'm afraid, Captain Lumley, I couldn't tell you as much as you would want to know. Here is Gerald; he knows everybody, and can tell you all about them with a fulness of detail which I could not possibly copy."

Gerald it was indeed who had joined the couple and seated himself beside Laura on the ottoman, and it was moreover Gerald in the sulks.

Old Lady Cressy, eyeing Miss Harcourt with the vigilance of a

rather hungry cat, is wondering to herself whether that girl—whom she loves as much as elderly matrons whose daughters do not “go off” at all satisfactorily usually do love the beauties of the season—is going to make a fool of herself with that handsome captain. For Lady Cressy reads Laura’s inner soul a great deal more easily than Laura herself does, and she has duly marked and interpreted that heightening of the colour and softening of the sparkle of the eye of which Miss Harcourt herself is altogether unconscious. She is rather disappointed than otherwise when Gerald unceremoniously joins the couple, for she has become interested in the pursuit of this interesting species of game, and regards the baronet’s son as a rude disturber of her innocent mode of recreation.

“I do believe that ugly boy is smitten with the girl. He is worth having, for Sir George can’t possibly live long; but Miss Laura is a great deal more inclined towards the penniless cousin. I was just thinking, my dear Mrs. Harcourt,” says the venerable old sinner, turning with a bland simper towards her hostess, who passes at the moment, “that I never saw Miss Harcourt looking better than she does to night.”

Mrs. Harcourt is a mother, and has a mother’s pride in her lovely daughter, but she has not lived in society in vain, and she knows the precise value of Lady Cressy’s compliment. So she has a polite enquiry to make respecting dear Miss Cressy’s health, and a civil word of congratulation to offer on the announcement that Miss Emilie Cressy is about to give her hand to young Mr. Hawkins of the Civil Service. Lady Cressy answers the enquiry and receives the congratulation with exuberant gratitude. Shall we class Mrs. Harcourt and Lady Cressy as a pair of hypocrites? I think not. And yet the former knows that there was a fearful scene at Cressy House when Lady Cressy discovered that poor forlorn Emilie, who had lived to six-and-twenty without receiving a single eligible offer, had committed herself with the fortunate Hawkins; and the latter is perfectly aware that Mrs. Harcourt has this knowledge. But what would you have? Are men and women always to speak the truth? Are no polite fictions to be tolerated in good society? Life is not very pleasant as it is; but I fear it would become altogether unbearable if that virtue which all of us are so ready to extol were constantly to be practised, and if “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” were to be expressed in word, glance, and action everywhere and at all times.

In the meantime the trio on the ottoman are not enjoying what our Yankee cousins would call “a good time.” Gerald is in the sulks; the Captain wears his brightest smile, and speaks in

his gayest tones, but Miss Lumley, though she responds to Arthur's observations, is somewhat grave and absent in her manner. For in society and out of it, in London ball-rooms and in rural lanes, that homely proverb which draws a distinction between the company of two and of three holds good ; and Laura is just now unpleasantly conscious of its truth. It is perhaps the fact that she has become suddenly aware of the force of the old saw, that has occasioned her present absence of mind. She is becoming dimly convinced that the pleasure which she feels in the society of the Indian hero is not without its risks, and that it might possibly be well for her to pause in time, and to draw back from an intercourse for the issue of which she is hardly prepared.

"You don't seem to be very lively to-night, Laura," said Gerald, who had stoutly maintained the right of addressing the friend of his childhood by her Christian name.

"Am I not very lively? Well, I can't always be expected to be as full of life and good spirits as some happy mortals are."

"I suppose you mean as my cousin is, Laura," returned Gerald with a cool malice.

Laura blushed, but said nothing. The truth is that she had been envying Captain Lumley's wonderful flow of easy, good-humoured talk, and it was therefore rather disconcerting to have her inner thoughts detected.

"Come, Gerald," interposed Arthur, coming up to the young lady's assistance, "you are becoming personal. I was asking Miss Lumley just now to tell me something about 'who's who' in the company, and perhaps you can save her the trouble of doing so."

"If you want to have a caricature of everybody here drawn for your gratification, I could not recommend you to apply to any one better than Gerald," said Laura with a smile. "He is very sarcastic, but sarcasm is what the young gentlemen of the present generation most admire, and 'blessed are they that sneer' the beatitude which they do most to merit."

Upon which Gerald, stroking his upper lip, for the faint fringe of down upon it was not yet worthy of being dignified by a name of its own, proceeded to describe to his cousin in terse and lively sentences the various celebrities who were to be seen in Mrs. Harcourt's rooms that evening.

Great statesmen, great noblemen, distinguished foreigners, eminent authors, learned judges were there ; but all were alike criticized and dismissed in a single sentence by the spoilt lad of nineteen, who had undertaken the task of pointing them out to his cousin. It is pleasant, is it not, to see the easy manner in which we criticize, weigh, condemn our great men? Mr. Pigmy,



whose ideas of politics are limited to a faint notion "that that confounded fellow, Bright, is getting far too much of his own way," or whose knowledge of literature is confined to the *Ruff's Guide to the Turf*, and the "Chronicles of Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour," does not hesitate a moment when he is asked what he thinks of Tennyson or Browning, Disraeli or Gladstone; and the dear soul is infinitely astonished if any one should venture to hint a doubt as to his ability to express an opinion worth having upon such a subject. And Mr. Pigmy only represents a large, a very large class, amongst which you and I, courteous reader, ought in all probability to be classed.

So we must not be too hard upon Gerald when, indicating a great statesman who had just entered the room, he said—

"There's Clubworth, Arthur; he looks about ninety years old when he smiles and a hundred-and-twenty when he doesn't. I remember when I was a boy"—innocent Gerald!—"he nearly frightened me out of my wits, one day when he had been calling at my father's, and was leaving the house. He was crossing the hall, and he had such a scowl on his face that I ran away howling!"

"Don't talk of Mr. Clubworth in that way, Gerald," said Laura: "he's a man I admire immensely; he is almost the only earnest man in London, and there's nothing equal to earnestness."

"Miss Harcourt is rather too young to know much about earnestness," said a voice behind them, and Gerald, turning, saw his father.

At the same moment Harcourt himself came up with a hasty step, and whispering something in his friend's ear, led him towards the door.

"There are our respected and most respectable parents going to talk politics," was the flippant comment of Gerald upon the action. But Lord Cleverly was claiming Laura's hand for the next dance, so the three young people we have been watching for a while were parted. Ere they met again, changes of which they, in their happy innocence, had then no conception had altered the currents of each of their lives.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE RIVER.

"HAVE you heard any news from the city to-day, George?" asked the statesman when he and his friend were safe in the shelter of his study.

There was something in Harcourt's manner which made the

other start, and hesitate as he uttered a simple negative to the question.

"What do you mean?" he added when he saw how grave was the face of his old friend.

"God grant that there may be nothing in it; but Cleverly, who, you know, is generally one of the first to hear anything of that sort, has just told me that they are uneasy about the Grand Alliance."

"Uneasy about the Grand Alliance!" repeated the baronet slowly. "My dear Charles, the man must be dreaming. I had a letter from my agent this morning, and he tells me again, what he has so often told me before, and what, moreover, I know without needing to be told by him, that there never was a finer thing put out in the city. Why, don't you know who the 'allies' are?"—and Sir George ran over a list of world-famous names.

"Yes, yes; I know all about that, and I hope that this is only some idle rumour; but"—and Harcourt's voice became strangely clear and solemn, until it sounded in the ears of the other like the knell of cherished hopes, and he shuddered in spite of himself—"but you must make enquiries at once. You have all Gerald's fortune invested in the Grand Alliance; you can't afford to lose that, or even to risk it. It would be ruin a second time."

"Ruin!" said the other, with a wild scared look, as though he had just been confronted by the awful possibility of such a catastrophe, "it would be worse than ruin. It would be death. But for Heaven's sake tell me what you have heard."

"Cleverly has just come away from Schmidt's, where there has been a dinner of city men, and he heard the rumour from Schmidt himself. He could hardly have heard it from a higher source."

"Rumour! what rumour? you—you bewilder me, Charles," gasped out the baronet, with a return of that feeble irritation from which we have seen him suffer at a former stage in his history.

"The rumour that the Grand Alliance is hollow; that the Grand Allies are eaten up with liabilities, and that the new company is rotten to the core. That is the rumour, George. Heaven grant that it may not be true."

"It's a lie!" burst out the other with a savage oath. "It's a lie, and Cleverly ought to be ashamed of himself for coming here with his miserable inventions. Do you hear me, Charles? I say it's a lie. Won't you believe me rather than Cleverly?"

And the baronet turned an imploring face to his friend; looking to him for some ray of comfort now, just as he had done on that November evening long ago, when we first saw him in the dining-room at Lumley. Yet once more he had to look in vain.

There were traces of deep emotion on Harcourt's face; but all that he said by way of answer was :

"Let us see if there is anything in the evening papers. Here is the last edition of the *Globe*."

The other almost snatched the paper from his friend's grasp, and with a shaking hand opened it, turned to the column headed "City Intelligence," read for a few moments, and then with a low groan returned the journal to Harcourt, and sank into a chair.

This was the first paragraph, printed in "leaded" type, which met Harcourt's eye :—

"Rumours of a very serious character have been current in many quarters in the city this afternoon with reference to the affairs of the Grand Alliance Discount Company (Limited). We are not in a position to state whence these rumours originated or what foundation they may have in fact. The Grand Alliance Discount Company (Limited) is, as we need hardly remind our readers, intended to carry on the operations of the great firm known in the financial world as the Grand Allies, composed exclusively of the leading representatives of some of the oldest and most influential of our commercial families. It seems incredible that at this early period in the operations of the new company—backed up as it is by the members of the old firm—it should have encountered any perils more formidable than those which usually attend the launching of any large enterprise. Nevertheless the unpleasant fact is that the shares, which stood this morning at a premium of 25 per cent., suddenly receded to *par* just before the hour of closing this afternoon, and the after-closing quotations are even below that figure. Something like a panic is in consequence prevailing in the neighbourhood of Capel Court."

"There is no doubt now that something serious has taken place, Lumley," were the first words Harcourt uttered after reading the paragraph. "You must rouse yourself, however, and see what the truth really is, and how much damage has been done. We must hope that it is only some temporary panic."

The other rose from the chair where he had been half sitting, half lying; he rose, and for once the white, feeble face wore a look of such determination, and the shrunken figure was raised to its full height with such energy, that Harcourt wondered at the sudden development of a hidden dignity and power in his friend.

"Charles," said Sir George Lumley,—and his voice sounded clearer and fuller than it had done for many a year, whilst he raised his hand with a gesture which forbade any interruption from the other—"Charles, I have not deserved this. You know how hard I have worked to repair the ruin I made, not by deliberate sin but by heedless folly, in my youth; you know, aye, and God knows, how I have laboured to atone for the wrong I have done to my poor lad. Don't interrupt me, Charles; I must say my say.



I tell you that if this is true—and I have no hope after reading that paragraph that it is not—I have been cruelly dealt with by God. I haven't deserved it, I say, and my boy hasn't deserved it either; and if this is the way I am to be dealt with by the Almighty I—I won't submit to it. I'll kill myself sooner."

He was breathing hard now; but he glared round the room with a defiant glance, as though he expected to see some hidden hand stretched out to strike him to the earth in answer to his impious challenge; aye, and as though he were ready for the blow, and ready also to return it with his puny arm.

Harcourt stood irresolute. In answer to words like these he felt that he had nothing to say. He was a deeply religious man: religious not according to the fashionable creed of Belgravia, or indeed according to any special creed at all. His religion was a sentiment rather than a system. As such it was very comforting to himself, but somehow he felt as though it could not be applied to such a case as this. Texts of Scripture coursed through his mind—sweet texts, wonderful texts, which have cheered and comforted many a stricken soul in its sorest strait, and have thrown floods of light upon the gloomiest depths of the dark valley of affliction. But what text was there that could be used here? Where was the Scripture that could carry relief into that pent-up heart which in its sudden grief had shut itself up against all comfort? Tears came into the great statesman's eyes, the first tears that had been there for many a year, and all that he could say was,

"Thank God He understands your anguish, and will not judge you by your words."

"I have had enough of His judgments," was the sullen reply. "I'm a crushed man now; fate has done its worst."

Out into the night, away from the house of light and mirth, the man before whom this new grief had suddenly opened, wandered desperate and reckless. Fain would his friend have accompanied him, but the other sterily forbade him. "Don't fear for me, I shall do nothing for the present: I promise you that upon my honour, and I must be alone now." So alone he went forth.

His agent, through whom he had bought his shares in the Grand Alliance, lived at Clapham. It was long past midnight, nevertheless Sir George called a passing cab and told the man to drive to the Cedars.

As the cab rattled over the pavement of Westminster Bridge the broken man within it looked out upon the great river with its cold waters glistening in the light of a thousand lamps. What were his thoughts as he did so? They are easily told. May heaven

grant that you, reader, have never cherished such thoughts ; and yet if they have never once crossed your mind then has your life been a happier one than that which falls to the lot of most mortals here. To Sir George Lumley the dark river flowing onward to the great city brought the first comforting thought which had entered his mind since Harcourt had broken to him the news respecting the Grand Alliance. When he had spoken of killing himself rather than submitting to the decrees of Providence, he hardly grasped the idea of suicide. Now, however, he saw, or thought he saw, rest and peace, sleep and oblivion, in the silent stream. No murmur of the world's reproof would reach him here ; no pang of remorse for the evil he had done would pierce his heart when once it was wrapped in the river's cold embrace. So thought he, and he found strange comfort in the thought, poor soul.

But in the meantime work had to be done. When the house at the Cedars was reached and the sleeping servants roused, the only response which Sir George received to his anxious enquiries for his agent was an intimation that Mr. Nesbitt had left town early in the afternoon and was not expected to return for several days.

Of course under the circumstances this seemed simply a confirmation of the truth of the rumour. It did not occur to Lumley that legitimate business might have called the man away. He at once attributed his absence to the collapse of the Grand Alliance. He returned to town feeling assured now that the ruin of the Company was complete. Though it was now the very middle of the night, he stretched his head from the carriage window as he passed Charing Cross in the vague expectation of hearing the newsboys crying the great news with which town was about to be startled ; and when he entered the hall of his own house he fancied that his very *valet* knew all about the panic in the city and the ruin of his hopes.

"Leave me now," said he dismissing the man, "and let me have my letters and the *Times* the moment they come."

He threw himself upon a couch without removing his clothes, and fell almost immediately into an uneasy slumber. He seemed to have been sleeping for hours, and in dreamland he had conversed once more with both his dead wives, and had lived through whole years of his past life, when he was aroused by a knock at the door. He started up, confused and bewildered, only to see his servant enter.

"I forgot to give you this note, sir, when you came in. It was left here about nine o'clock last evening."

"What o'clock is it? How long have I been asleep?" asked his master.

The servant looked at him with surprise, and he might be forgiven the suspicion which immediately crossed his mind, that Sir George Lumley had for once so far forgotten himself as to indulge in too much drink.

"It is not more than five minutes since I left you, Sir George."

But the other took no heed of the answer, for he saw that this note, marked "private," and crumpled as though it had been carried by some unaccustomed messenger, was from Nesbitt, the stockbroker.

There was just three lines hastily scrawled on a sheet of note paper, and signed "S. N."—"I am sorry to say the G. A. D. C. is clean gone. The directors are the greatest swindlers out. The doors will be shut within four-and-twenty hours. I'm ruined, and shall leave England to-night."

There was no need for Sir George Lumley to rouse himself now. Quickly he got up and turned to a table where there were writing materials, and upon which a lamp burned softly, for through the thick folds of the curtains the light of the early summer morning could not find its way into the room. He sat down and took his pen in his hand, as he did so, it dropped from his grasp upon the floor. With an exclamation of impatience he seized it again, and then sat for a moment irresolute. He was about to commit two of the most disgraceful sins which can stain the soul of any man. He was going to break the pledged word he had given to the friend who trusted him, and he was going to commit the crime of self-murder. He paused a moment, and then there rushed across him the recollection of the river—the river which was now beautiful with the light of the rising sun—it decided him. Slowly, and by an effort which was strangely painful, for his hand seemed suddenly to have lost its wonted use, he wrote as follows :

"DEAR FRIEND,

"Forgive me for breaking the solemn pledge I gave you. Forgive me, and ask my poor lad to forgive me, also. I cannot live. I am too miserable, and too hopeless to look at any of you again. Were it not for Gerald all would be easy to bear; as it is, all is unbearable. Farewell.

"G. L."

He folded and sealed the letter, directed it to Harcourt, and then quietly stole out of the room. Everything looked ghostly and dim in the hall as he wrapped a loose overcoat round himself; the lamp still burned on the table, though it was now scarcely



visible in the advancing dawn—emblems thus of the present life which shall be swallowed up in that greater light of the future life. Slowly and nervously he unbarred and threw open the door. A flood of fresh morning air rushed into the hall, and with it the earliest songs of the birds in the park. The grass was wet with dew: earth seemed to have renewed her beauty during the night and to be awaking now in fresh loveliness. As Sir George Lumley looked out upon the fair scene before him, the flowers, the trees, the herbage, the blue sky, he felt what so many stricken souls have felt, that Nature is after all the hardest of mothers, however great her children's woes may be, she still wears the same cold unchanging beauties as those which they learned to love in their sunnier hours.

This was the thought that passed through the guilty man's mind as he crossed the threshold of his house and closed the door behind him. All was silent. The houses on either hand were barred and closed; the street was empty; the birds had the park all to themselves. "I alone am miserable," said the baronet, as he stepped into the street—and at that first step he stumbled and fell, a limp and stricken heap in front of his own door.

The river may flow on now undisturbed; for to-day no fresh soul will be committed to its keeping, no new burthen of woe and sorrow will be added to those it has already borne onward to the boundless sea.

## R E V I E W.

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HANS BREITMANN IN CHURCH, WITH OTHER BALLADS. By Charles G. Leland. London: Trübner & Co. 1870.

THERE is one thing we owe to that land which is said to be bounded on the east by the Atlantic ocean, on the west by the setting sun, on the north by the Aurora Borealis, and on the south by the day of judgment, viz., a peculiar style of humour. It is not to be found in any other country. We ourselves have only just commenced to fully appreciate it. The genuine Yankee possesses, as his birthright, a shrewd sense of humour, a certain dry, caustic fun, which is his own peculiarly. Although, as a people, we are not in the least disposed to laugh at other people's jokes, and though we have, until lately, thought that all intellectual brilliancy was confined to the British islands, we have been forced, at last, to pay an unwilling tribute to the audacious experiments in wit and humour, which have reached us from across the Atlantic.

Before we go into the present volume *seriatim*, we propose saying one word upon the peculiar style of humour which characterises these lays of Mr. Leland's. In a very able article written four years ago, when the Artemus Ward fever was at its height, the author, little dreaming that a Breitmann should arrive to be chronicled in song, thus coolly puts all Germans out of the pale of humour:—"As for Germans, it need not be said that they are about as sensitive to humour, as so many apple dumplings. The surgical operation, which, as sanguine enthusiasts have supposed, *might* get a joke into the head of a Scotchman, would be thrown away upon a German. Sauerkraut or Bavarian beer or home-grown tobacco, seem to act as effectual prophylactics." Trying a joke upon a genuine German, is like tickling a rhinoceros with a straw, or rather like digging Mr. Wardell's fat boy in the ribs. You may possibly send a ripple over his surface, but you don't penetrate the outside layer." Yet, the Germans had Heinrich Heine, and it is impossible to find fewer specimens of savage, biting humour, than his Romanzero. As there are more Germans in America than in any other foreign country, they may have been inoculated with the humour of the Yankee, and these ballads of Mr. Leland's are perfect specimens of the placid philosophy of the German, and the quaint humour of the New Yorker. The hero of these ballads—Breitmann himself, around whom all the

interest of the story circles, is a trooper in the Federal army, and may be compared to one of the German Lansknechts of the middle ages, whom we so often find in the historical novel, and a good specimen of whom Miss Yonge gives us in the "Dove in the Eagle's Nest." Next to fighting and pillage, these worthies loved drinking; and, in the latter respect, the worthy Breitmann is no craven descendant. His debauches remind us of the mighty feasts of the Berserks, as they swallow fathomless oceans of mead in the halls of Odin. Falstaff's powers of imbibition sink into insignificance beside Mr. Leland's hero; and the liquor which was put away during the "Noctes," when North, and Hogg, and Tickler drank like fishes, and talked like gods, are as nothing to one of Hans Breitmann's "shtupendous shprees." At the "barty," which was his first introduction to the public, he frankly avows that "all got drunk ash pigs," not at all an unlikely conclusion, when a barrel of lager beer was drunk off "at von svig." Every one remembers what a mingled mass of criticism the first series evoked. Pious people shook their heads, and said that the little book was a mixture of profane swearing and indecency; the notion of "setting hell in a shiver," and the very peculiar religious views which the worthy German held, together with the picture of the "maiden wit noding on," made them shudder, and turn away their eyes from beholding such iniquity. Other critics affirmed that the dialect was unintelligible, and that the jokes would require translating into English, to be understood, as if decanted claret could be expected to retain its strength and fragrance. But there was a more unprejudiced class of critics who saw real power in the little book, and did not hesitate to affirm, that the strange-looking, half-German, half-Yankee verses were gems in their way, and that the hero's character was powerfully drawn, and real. It would be beside the purpose now, to go through the First Series with the Fourth demanding our attention. We will only remind the reader of the grim humour of Breitmann's Raid on Kansas, and the exquisitely ludicrous manner in which he and his troopers searched for the whiskey, as devoted to their quest as were the Laureate's knights to the quest of the Holy Grail. There was much wild recklessness too, in the verses with the victorious refrain, "cling clang, gloria, Victoria, Victoria, encore cerevisia; and the account Breitmann gives of his parentage, is irresistibly funny. The publication of the three remaining series has effected much good in one way. The reader has got accustomed to the Anglo-German *patois*, which at first was a serious drawback to the enjoyment of the humour, just in the same way as the outlandish choruses in some of Aristophanes' comedies were stumbling-blocks to the polished Athenian. The volume before us—"Hans Breit-



mann in Church," &c.—contains more German than any of the rest, and even gives us a specimen of the real gipsy tongue, "I Gili Romanesco,"—the original in German-gipsy, and a translation in German-English—"thus," to quote the preface, "casting a new light on the many-sided Bohemianism of Herr Breitmann." The same preface informs us that two of the ballads, "Hans Breitmann in Church," and "The first Edition of Breitmann," are founded upon facts in the war and elsewhere, which came under the author's own eyes.

It seems that during the war a certain iconoclastic officer did enter a church in or near Nashville, and behaving somewhat in the same way as Cromwell's Ironsides, devoted his energies to the destruction of things generally. On being reprimanded by his superior officer, this worthy complained of the "cruel and heartless stretch of military authority!"

Let us now take the ballads in their turn. The first is the most characteristic of the whole number, and unites in itself the mingled elements of humour, pathos, and sometimes real poetry.

There is a sly hit in the motto, culled from what mystic tome we know not, but it bears the suspiciously modern date of last year. It might be versified—

"Going to church is a pleasant affair,  
If wine and liquor and food be there."

In the good town of Tennessee the great Breitmann is discovered, as they say in the dramatists, chafing sorely at enforced idleness. Like the Homeric Greeks before Troy, or the modern Allies before Sebastopol, the soul of the trooper is awearied within him, because there is nothing to drink and no one to cross swords with. His impatience finds vent first in wild smiles, and then in very full-flavoured oaths indeed, in which he consigns both discipline and the general to perdition quite forcibly. Visions of the blazing roofs, and the plantations from which he had "gaddered many a brize," of the spies he had hung, of the "push-whackers" he had chased, came before his eye, and "Oh," says he—

"Vere I on my schimmel grey,  
Mein sabre in mein hand,  
*Dey should track me by de ruins*  
*Of de houses troo the land,*  
Dey should track me by the buzzards  
High sailen ofer head,  
A vollowing der Breitmann's trail  
To claw de repel dead."

While he is thus musing, up comes one Von Stossenheim, "who had theories of Gott." (It would be difficult to find the German who had not, and very peculiar ones too.) It is a judg-

ment, says the theorist, and the question is argued between them, the trifling amount of ten pounds of kanaster and three barrels of beer helping the consultation. Breitmann comes rather to grief in his polemics, and is wrecked hopelessly on the rocks of moral oxygen. But his religious views are so undefined, that he does not think it necessary to go to church at all; whereupon his opponent, with a sly touch of satire which must not be overlooked, insinuates that if the Church disgusts him, the greater credit will he get for going. Surely in these days when the congregation walks bodily out of a church when the priest appears in a surplice, and men make a candle or two an excuse for not worshipping the Deity, Von Stossenheim's logic should teach us a lesson.

Breitmann is undecided, till a negro contraband puts his head into the doorway, and informs him that hidden in the church are twenty barrels of whisky. This decides the worthy trooper at once, and the word is "boot and saddle." The night ride is well described, and a real occurrence, the firing into a guerilla ball-room, which took place at Murfeesboro on the night of February 10th or 11th, 1865, enlivens the scene. Here is a specimen of Mr. Leland's poetical style; the lines are musical enough, if the epithets are somewhat trite:—

"All rosen red, de morning fair,  
Shone gaily o'er de hill,  
All violet plue de shky crew deep  
In rifer, pond and rill;  
All cloudy grey de limeshtone rocks,  
Coom oop droo dimmering wood,  
All shnowy vite, in morning light,  
De shoorsch pefore dem stood."

Whilst the organist plays chorales of Sebastian Bach, the thirsty Breitmann secures the whisky, and one of the usual "shprees" ensues, which is interrupted rather rudely by the onset of rebels. In the fight, which is described with characteristic force, the philosopher Stossenheim gets his billet, and lies a-dying in the road. There is real pathos in his last words, peeping through the burlesque. His fast-glazing eyes are, like Byron's gladiator, "with his heart, and that is far away." Listen to his parting sigh—

"Ach weh, for de loved ones,  
Who wait so far behind;  
Dere's a frau dat sits in de Odenwald,  
Und shpins und dinks of me;  
Dere's a shild ash plays in de greening grass,  
Und sings a liddle hymn,  
*Und learns to shpeak a futher's name,*  
*Dat she never will speak to him.*

But mortal life ends shortly,  
 Und Heafen's life is long—  
 \* Wo beist du, Breitmann?—glaub 'es,  
 Gott suffers nothing wrong.  
 Now I die like a Christian soldier,  
 My head oopon my sword.  
 ' *In nomine domine !*  
 Vas Stossenheim his word."

These few words give us a choking sensation in the throat. Their pathos is simple and natural, "*simplex munditiis*." It would take too much space and time to criticise the other ballads in this most amusing volume at equal length.

The second on the list is also founded upon fact, and contains much sly satire against the publishers, who seem to have dealt with Mr. Leland rather scurvily. A ludicrous account of a pitched battle between the Dutch and Yankee printers is very well worth reading. One Dutchman defends the "Barty" on the score that—

"Nodings vas so looscious  
 In all dis earthly shpere  
 Ash a quart mug fool of sauer-kraut,  
 Mit a plate of lager bier."

The German address to his book is exactly in the spirit of Martial's "Roman vade liber." The little gipsy ballad is commonplace enough in the translation, whatever its merits may be in the original. "Steinli Von Slang" is a ballad, a bit of folk lore lengthened out into a romance. It is the old story of a hard-hearted princess making her lover perform impossible tasks ere he can win her, and the reader will instantly be reminded of Schiller's "Glove," and the story of the count and his cruel mistress. It seems that Von Slang, who is styled "de hell-driving," is set to do the somewhat Sisyphus-like work of rolling himself down from a tower. As he wanders about disconsolate, the usual old man of the fairy tale meets him, and asks change for a thaler, which change, being produced, is paid for by twenty thalers, and, says the 'Breitmann slyly, Steinli, being more honest than a great many people, ran after the old man as fast as he could. Though he caught him, he could not persuade him to take the money back. Nay, more, the goblin swore to stick to him through thick and thin, and make him tame the pride of the

"Gott-tamnable Fraulein Von Slang."

Next morning he ascends the tower, and the friendly spirit coming to meet him, they change bodies. The result of all which is, that Steinli does his appointed task, and wins his mistress, and "they lived happily ever afterwards."

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\* "Where art thou, Breitmann?—believe it."



“To a friend studying German” is a series of good advice, some of it humourous enough, such as eating a peck of sauer-kraut, and drinking

“Gott-knows-vot in vinegar,  
Und deuce-knows-vot in rum ;”

ending with one method of producing the Dutch which we will leave the reader to find out for himself.

And here we must take leave of our quaint old, swash-buckling trooper ; and, as no criticism can be complete without some words of reprobation, we will just venture to hint that there is perhaps too much profane swearing in these lyrics of his. Many good people who would be perfectly ready to acknowledge the evident humour of these ballads, would shrink in holy horror from the extremely awkward expressions which now and then crop up. Some will say that the chief charm lies in the quaintness of the German oaths and double-barrelled expletives. Others there are who think that “want of decency” in the matter of language “is want of sense.” All that we say is, that if the Breitmann indulged his predilection for this strong language in the London streets, it is not impossible that he might find himself standing before the Bow Street magistrate, and taking his option of a fine, or seven days with hard labour.

We are getting a fine flavour of morality into our lives now-a-days, and we think it bad style to swear as they used to do in Flanders in Uncle Toby’s time—not so much that it is a sin, but because it is not the thing. There is much—very much—to praise in this little volume. There is an intensity about the character of the Breitmann which makes him stand out before us a living creature. Just as old Jack Falstaff, with his wondrous powers of drinking, and his trick of language, and his various naughty qualities, becomes a familiar acquaintance, so the American-German, who drinks like a fish, and fights like a Berserk, and swears like a navigator, is drawn so naturally that we see the man before us, and know him right well. And we believe that we do not say too much when we affirm that these ballads lose none of their power from repetition. Most of their cotemporaries made a name for the first attempt, and sank into the limbo of lost hopes afterwards. These later songs of Mr. Leland do not belie the promise of the earlier series. We shall have much pleasure in greeting the hearty old trooper at a future time, and will only express the hope that the teaching of some apostle (shall we say Mr. F. Train ?) will have induced him to give up the habit of hard swearing.





. . . I love thee, midnight, with such love  
As sleeps my spirit in a dread delight.



## GOING TO THE BAD.

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THERE is one great point about a slang term, that it generally expresses in a few words what a page of hum-drum conventional English will not do. It is *totus teres atque rotundus*. Its brevity gives it a proverbial claim to wit, and its popularity will vouch for its being easily understood. Hence it is that I have chosen a term which is in everybody's mouth, as the heading of my present article, for it is, at any rate, as well that both writer and reader should know something about what is to be written and read, though as regards the former, the demand is more than equal to the supply.

Now, if there be one person more than another who is considered to be the private property of the British writer of fiction, it is the gentleman who is going, or gone, to the bad—"to the dogs," as some do phrase it, implying thereby that there must be some isle, certainly not one of those *νησοὶ τῶν εὐδαιμόνων* that lie in the dreamless sea, but a veritable Isle of Dogs, to which all those unhappy beings whose lives have been wrecked, drift hopelessly and aimlessly. The man whose duty it is to find the reading public amusement, and himself bread and clothing, by writing novels, must tire at last of describing the inevitable Berserk, whose biceps and columnar throat are the admiration of idiotic young ladies, as his Cashmere dressing-gown and velvet smoking-jacket, are the despair of his more impecunious fellows; and who, without any effort save that of slinging his left hand from his hip can thrash half-a-dozen prize-fighters in full training, backed by a dozen labourers in full health. The suffering public begin to tire of "Ruthless Rhy," and the young Guardsman whose countenance in the morning after the deepest wassail and the most desperate losses at cards, is as pink as a cherub's and as innocent as a girl's. People have seen him often enough, and they hiss him off the stage. And so with the British curate. The ingenious compounders of three volumes begin to find that it will never do to fill two out of the three with the woes of a consumptive young divine, with an M.B. waistcoat, and a cough, and an ability to talk dreary platitudes; together with a congregation brutal enough

to laugh at candles and flowers, and a squire hardened enough to refuse him the hand of his rich daughter. And then in his extremity the baffled novelist cries "Eureka." There is the well-worn but still useful "gentleman in reduced circumstances," who, if judiciously managed, and put in the best light, will still draw. There is still much fine writing to be expended on the melancholy remains of what was once a rich, respectable merchant, but is now reduced to hold cabs; and much *pathos* may be used with regard to the general, broken-down air, which seems to say, "I have seen better days."

I suppose all of us keep, if not in reality, at all events in our minds, certain photograph books, filled with the likenesses of those of our acquaintances who have gone to the bad. An it were not that I should be deemed cynical, I would furthermore hint that, very frequently in the heyday of our own prosperity and happiness, we feel a certain pleasure in gazing at these mementos of wrecked lives, and thanking the Father, with a certain Pharisee who prayed in the Temple long since, that we are not even as they. It is pleasant, says the Roman poet, for those safe on land to look on their less fortunate brethren who are having a bad time of it on the stormy ocean, and in the same ratio there is a feeling of placid content stealing over us when after the storm and unrest of life we have reached a tolerably quiet harbour, to see the broken spars and the fragments of our fellow-voyagers, who have made shipwreck of it. Is it not an axiom as old as the everlasting hills, that men are pleased at the misfortunes of others. When your new hat, my friend, is blown off into the delectable mud of the London streets, do not the spectators grin and roar with merriment, while you stand cursing in impotent wrath until such time as the friendly policeman shall have restored your ruined head-gear. And let me ask, is it an amiable solicitude about the welfare of the passengers that attracts such crowds of laughing people (and the greater part, upon my verity, of the gentler sex) to the pier when the Boulogne packet comes in, or is it the intense pleasure felt by those who have breakfasted and bathed, in seeing the wretched crowd of blue-cheeked spectres, who have been ill all night, stagger up from below. It is not amiable, it is not kindly in us; but the fact is that we do feel a little pleasure in the griefs of others. And, therefore, I cannot lay my hand on my heart and truthfully aver that this moment I am not thanking my stars that I have not gone to the bad in company with many a by-gone friend, whose face stares reproachfully at me from out the gloom. For to-night I am in a moralising mood. Everything around is quiet. There is a great, calm, solemn stillness hovering about me, for

night, the queenly, the pitiful, has laid her finger upon the eyelids of men and women, and her twin-sister, sleep, has taken them off into the border-land of dreams. Weary heart is still, and plotting brain is at rest, for a time, and the purple sky, "like God's great pity," seems watching tenderly with its myriad stars over a tired, sleeping city.

There is something awfully mysterious in the way in which past scenes, past faces, come plainly before one in the quiet of the night. It is as though the glare and the turmoil of the busy garish day frightened them away, or that they know we cannot spare the time to think of them when the nerve is strung, and the muscle is braced, to help fleet foot and willing hand in the race of life. But when merciful night and sleep, "beloved from pole to pole," come, they bring in their train a shadowy host of things of the past, and we hold calm communion with them, and the whole room is full of dim outlines, and instinct with half-heard voices; and the great gulf between then and now, seems bridged over with memory. I am going to open my photograph album to-night—part the work of that faithful limner, memory, and part the actual labour of the photographer—and show you a few portraits of my friends who have gone to the bad, and tell you their little histories in my own random, rough way. I have no wish "to point a moral," and of a surety I am hopelessly unable to write, much less "adorn a tale." I cannot away with the system which takes a broken-down man and puts him on a platform and makes him tell the shameful story of his life before ladies, and gentlemen in broadcloth, and the odour of sanctity, that forsooth, they may learn to take example. The old Spartan custom of making the wretched Helot drunk, that he might teach the evil of intoxication, was refined, compared to this. And to hear the unctuous complacency with which the abject lay-figure dwells upon the shamefulness of his past life, makes one sick. It reminds one of the reformed character who used to exclaim, "Every sin in the Decalogue, *thank God*, have I committed, except murder,"—meaning thereby, that the present change in him was made all the more satisfactory.

Why do not the good Exeter Hall folks for once in a way produce examples of what temperance, and cleanliness, and honesty can do on their platforms? Why not, for the sake of teaching morality and Christianity, show an average working man—neither an angel nor a devil—to tell the story of *his* life, instead of the converted prizefighter, whose language may be pious, but is so forcible that it makes harmless folks shudder, and the reformed cabman, whose repentance may be genuine, but whose eye in its fishiness suggests recent *delirium tremens*? So understand, *mī fratres*



*dilecti*, I am not going to preach you a sermon, neither am I going to make my poor lost friends a wholesome warning; I am simply filling up an idle hour for myself and a few minutes for you, in chatting over my photographic portraits of men gone to the bad. Now there be many ways of going to the bad. Some take a lifetime to accomplish the dreary journey, and are rescued time after time out of difficulties, others go there at once, and hopelessly, they have such little ballast on board the craft in which they essay to buffet life's waves that they sink, and there is an end of them. And there be many causes from which men go to the bad—drink, I am afraid, in many, many instances—ill luck in many, too, an innate tendency to find out *the* least likely thing to succeed, and instantly to venture into it, and in some instances—and these chiefly in books—the being crossed in love. And as there are many reasons for going to the bad, so there are many and diversified types of men who travel on that dreary and hopeless road. There is the bankrupt officer who has reached the inevitable bourne, and who is generally to be seen in places where living is to be obtained at the cheapest rate. A very common object of the sea-shore, and one to be met with most frequently at small watering-places. In the Channel Isles these *enfants perdus* have their habitation in great numbers; they are a gregarious lot, and misfortune binds men together. No one can stay long in Jersey or Guernsey, or in that refuge for the outlawed, that Cave of Adullam, Boulogne, without meeting a specimen. Scrupulously neat in attire—military habits have taught them that—with an undefinable air of the barrack-room still clinging to their persons, these unfortunates herd together on the pier, and watch with eager glance the boat-loads of passengers, if by any chance they may recognise an acquaintance who will stand a dinner, or at any rate a glass of liquor and a cigar. Under the influence of good meat and generous liquors they unbend, these poor captains, and curse their fate in the most feeling terms, bewailing in maudlin accents their ill-luck—they put all their misfortunes down to that, and the ingratitude of a worthless country that slights their valuable services. How they manage to keep body and soul together is an appalling mystery. Sometimes when they can borrow a sovereign to start with, a run of luck at cards or billiards makes them for a time even respectable. They blaze once more in gorgeous attire; they are once more the pride of the gallant 140th, and bully the waiters at hotels, much in the same way as they were wont to do their messmen in halcyon days. But it is the peculiarity of the man who is determined to go to the bad that he cannot rest till all his ready money is spent. With a couple of guineas in his pocket he will order a dinner of turtle-soup, game, and Lafitte,

and after that he will starve till the next turn of fortune. And so these poor *soldados* keep struggling on, getting deeper and deeper every day, till at last there is a vacant place in the shabby coterie, and people say, "There's poor De Boots gone; what a wild dog he was, to be sure. I remember when the 140th were at Malta," and so on. This is his epitaph. Then there is the business man who has gone to the bad—a very common type, one who has turned his hand to everything and visited many countries, and settled down finally as hopelessly gone to the bad. About him, too, there lingers some faint air of respectability, and he, in common with his fellow-victim, is firmly impressed with the idea that the powers of luck were in league against him. He entered the tea-trade just at the very time when everybody else rushed into it; they retired on incompetencies, he is the "wreck that you see." He tried book-hawking, fortune of course put him down in a place where people had not a literary turn of mind. His friend's interest got him a place as clerk in an office. Of course the company went to smash. He was sent out to New Zealand; when he got there, illness compelled him to return immediately. And so runs his jeremiad; but there are infallible signs in the man's face, glazed eye, lank cheek, moist lips, that tell their tale, and the frightful eagerness with which he accepts your offer of a drink, clutching the glass as if it were his salvation, is quite significant of what has brought him to the dogs. And there is the non-descript crowd of wretches who prowl about London streets without any means whatever of getting bread, who rush to open cab doors, and act as assistants to watermen, and fill the casual ward o' nights. Many of these have the same story to tell—they have seen better days. Many of those men are entitled to a place in society's scarlet-covered Bible (for it is not only on the stage that broken-down baronets drive hansom cabs). Many of them have been popular boys at Eton, and taken their degree at the University, but they have sunk so low, that after repeated succour their friends have lost sight of them altogether, and they crawl off into corners like poisoned rats to die, and I am very much afraid that no one misses them.

And now here is No. 1 in the collection of my friends who have gone to the bad. I cannot help a tightening at the throat as I look on the photograph. A handsome, frank-looking young man, in a college boating uniform, without a shadow of care on his face, and his mouth expanded into a broad grin of delight. I may well sigh over this bit of pasteboard, for Jack Danvers was my best and fastest friend—" *Meorum prime sodalium* "—though he beat me in everything, and won prizes in everything which he put his hand to.

Amongst us young fellows at St. Chad's, as amongst all University men, there was a great love of hero-worship, and Jack was our first of men, our Alcibiades. Did things look desperate for the boat, Jack Danvers threw away his books, and had men out in "tub fours," and, in his place as "stroke," saved many a bump. We had given up all hope of a "first" from within our walls till Jack's name appeared in that class, and it is remembered to this day how he confounded the examiner who asked him for an example in Thucydides to prove his point. "I'll give you fifty, if you like," blandly responded Jack, and proceeded to quote till the examiner was fain to bid him stop. And he could fight a bit, too, on occasion. Few men will forget how that, on one very noisy "Fifth," he came upon some townsmen, five to one, who were frightening a poor little milliner, near the College-gate. To take her up bodily and hand her over to the porter, with as much courteous grace as if she had been a countess, was the work of one instant, and the next Jack's right and left were hitting out, silently and swiftly, till all that was left of his foes was one, so fearfully punished that he could not get up. I was proud of the man, and, shone in a reflected light, it was something to be seen arm-in-arm with the admirable Crichton. But college days, more is the pity, will not last for ever; and the time comes when Orestes and Pylades must take their last stroll along Christ Church meadows, smoke their last pipe in the roomy punt, eat the last dinner in the glorious old Hall, and separate. Jack had then some Quixotic ideas about an early marriage and was shyly eloquent about a certain little lady, so he took orders at once, and promised to do great credit to the Church. I stayed behind and read for my fellowship, and eventually took orders too. For years, although we never met, there was a regular correspondence maintained. Jack had that rarest of all gifts—of writing a perfect letter, and it seemed that all was *couleur-de-rose*. He had accepted a chaplaincy somewhere abroad, and was getting on famously. From that time I heard nothing of him. Getting tired of idling at Oxford; hearing the same time-worn jokes in the common-room, night after night, and hammering *literæ humaniores* into a class day after day, I accepted a living in one of the lowest parts of London, determined to familiarize myself with parochial work, and do some good if I could. Terrible work it was—first to humanize men, and then to draw them to repentance; but I liked it, and laboured away contentedly. One evening, about dusk, I was passing through one of the most wretched localities in my parish. The weather was not fit for a dog to be out in, and I was hurrying home as fast as I could, when, just as I passed a doorway, a shapeless mass of rags and filth, which had just the semblance



of a human being and no more, shambled up and took hold of my sleeve. "I am starving: for the love of God, just one penny. I have seen better days." To the last words I should not have paid the least attention, seeing that it was the shibboleth with all the beggars about my gate, and with many women, concerning whom, the least said the soonest mended. But the despairing cry for bread and, above all, the delicate intonation of voice, which none but a gentleman can use, made me curious. I took the creature under a lamp, and then, there was no mistake, the light flashed upon the features of my dear old college chum—the idol of St. Chad's—Jack Danvers. The fashion on the stage, I believe, in these emergencies, is to utter a sound varying between a shriek and a laugh, and to embrace. I did not do this. I simply said—"Why, Jack, old fellow, don't you know me?" But the creature only whimpered, "Bread; I am starving!" all his memory, like his manhood, seemed gone. We got to my lodgings at last; and, much to the disgust of my landlady, I ushered the shocking object into my sitting-room. Food was brought and, while the starving man ate, or rather tore off pieces and devoured them, I watched him closely. "*Quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore*," his face pinched and worn to the bone, his breast fallen in, his clothes just sticking to his body. Could it be the man? "Don't you know me yet, Jack? Don't you remember St. Chad's and H——?" Then the flood-gates of memory seemed lifted, and a rush of light poured into the wretched man's mind. He hid his face, tried to rush away, and then cowered down on the table and sobbed. Oh, how he sobbed! Great, choking, gasping sobs, that break one's heart to hear. "Come, cheer up, old man, and tell me all about it." He had not heard a kind word for months, and mine had the same effect on him as the sweet rain on the flowers. He raised his head at last and moaned. "Oh, don't ask me—I am broken down. But I say, Charley," with frightful eagerness, "have you got any brandy about?"

Has my reader ever seen a confirmed drunkard take liquor which he has been craving for in vain? I should like some of my young friends who are seeing what they call "life" to have seen that sight. In an instant he had poured out half a glass of the raw liquor, and swallowed it like water. But the food and the stimulant were too much for him. He began to rave incoherently, and—how pitiable it was to hear him—to talk in the old college slang, then fell asleep. I waited patiently till he awoke seemingly refreshed, and then in the stillness of the night I heard his shameful story—the story of going to the bad. It is much too long to repeat in detail. I only gathered fragments from him, and ever and anon he would burst out with, "Only one little drop more. I

am burning with thirst. Oh God that a gentleman and a clergyman should have come to this!" Bit by bit his history came out. The foreign chaplaincy was his ruin. "I sometimes fancy," he said, "that I must have been *born* a drunkard, though I was cunning and hid it from everybody. No one found out that I drank at St. Chad's, but I did for a time. When I took orders I fairly conquered it, and didn't feel the want. But one night at W—— I took too much, and from that moment there were a thousand devils gnawing at my heart. I was miserable till I got half drunk. Of course they wouldn't keep me at the chaplaincy. I played at the tables till luck deserted me altogether; then I came to London—hiding all day and sneaking about like a thief at night, for it would have killed me then to have met a friend; now I don't care, I am done for. I don't know how I have lived, penny-a-lining for some time till my hand shook so I couldn't hold the pencil,—holding cab doors for a copper,—anything to get a drop of liquor. I have craved, I have *prayed* for brandy as a dying man prays for life. But when you met me I had not tasted food for four days, and I was lying down to die. Have I any friends? They have cut me long ago. Stay, there's one still." He took out a little miniature case, and showed me a girl's face. "There's one still cares, still prays for me if she is alive."

I tried to talk to him about his religious state. "It's no use, it's no use, Charley; I've had my chance, and I'm done for now. '*Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede*,' you know, and I shan't be long."

Here was a wrecked life, indeed; but what could I do for him? He entreated me not to give him money; he would drink himself mad if I did. So I dressed him up in some of my clothes,—the man who when he chose to dress at Oxford was unapproachable—and I set myself to find him employment. Thanks to his reading and ability this was soon found. I made him lodge near me, and kept a zealous watch over him. But one night my landlady came up white, staring: "Oh, sir, Mr. D— is taken awfully bad; do come." I would rather not say what I saw when I entered the room. *Delirium tremens* I had witnessed before, but never anything like this. He had gone to the worst now, and I hoped almost that he would die. Ah, but it was piteous to hear his fancies, his broken quotations, his frantic cries for help. Once he broke out into the beautiful prayer from the Orestes—how strange the Greek sounded in that place—

Πότνια, πότνια νύξ  
 ὑπνοδότειρα τῶν πολυποντῶν βροτῶν  
 ἐρέβοθεν ἰθι.

And very soon the merciful sleep of death did come, and in a gloomy London churchyard, with only one friend to say "Farewell!" the wreck of a gifted man was laid to rest. *Vale ter Vale!* No wonder my tears are falling on this thy photograph, and that I am only too ready to turn over the page.

My poor clerical black sheep has taken up so much of the present writing, that I must needs say but a few words about the other portraits in my album. Four words will tell the life-story of the next figure—debt, gambling, disgrace, ruin. Charley Blair was one of mine ancients at the University, and a look at his portrait brings back surging memories of one who was, without exception, one of the best amateur actors of his time. As "Tony Lumpkin" he is here depicted, and he has the very look of that fat, foolish son of Mrs. Hardcastle, and is saying to his low comrades, "Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons." This great gift of acting made him popular; and to a poor man at the University, popularity is ruin. Better, far better, for a man who possesses a fine voice, or a brilliant manner, to hide the talent "deeper than ever plummet sounded," if he happen to be poor and at the same time proud; though, of course, your jester can make a good living out of his talent at the University, just as your good talker can turn his conversation into food and drink, but he must be content to feel that he is asked out merely as a hired performer, and play his antic feats at the word and beck of any one who will entertain him. Frequently a great gift has been the ruin and the death of a young fellow at college. Hartley Coleridge is a melancholy case in point; his unrivalled brilliancy of conversation made him much sought after.

No Oxford wine party was complete without the presence of the man whose wit flashed like diamonds, but the habit, which was the dark shadow of his life, was contracted then, and he must have lived to curse the day when he first listened to the tempter's whisper and fell. Drink, however, was not Charley Blair's stumbling block. He was poor, and couldn't keep up the same style as his fellows. Poverty leads to debt, and debt to gambling; after that the descent down the Avernian road is very easy indeed. And here I do feel tempted to say one word about the University credit system, seeing that this, my article, is merely a peg whereon to hang fragments of thought. It were to be wished that the popular novel would describe Oxford life as it really is in this matter of debt and credit, instead of drawing the wildest and most improbable pictures of the relation between tradesmen and undergraduate. There is no romance at all about the real picture. It is simply egregious folly on one side, and, in many cases, dis-



honesty on the other; and the sequel of the story is, that many a struggling barrister and half-starved clergyman are paying at this moment half their paltry stipends to fill the maw of the insatiable monster Debt. Now there can be no question that debt is a disgraceful, dishonest thing. It is not pleasant to be obliged to lurk in waiting for the untiring dun, and to be compelled to fasten the door lest one fall into his clutches. Dick Swiveller's notion of the street closed against him on every side is amusing enough to read of, partly because the man is a loveable character, and anything he does pleases us; but it is far from pleasant, in stern reality, to flee past a creditor like a guilty thing, to be afraid of putting in an appearance at the old college, lest we find at the gate a ghastly array of men, with long bills and exhausted patience. Debt is very disgraceful; but, on the other hand, the temptation which a schoolboy, fresh from the possession of half-a-crown a-week pocket-money, is compelled to undergo at the University, is simply appalling. Without a notion, very often, of what the value of money is, dazzled by the tempting things spread bait-like before his eyes, assured that he need not pay for them till it is perfectly convenient—ready money, indeed, being in some cases smilingly refused—his table covered with cards from City tradesmen, what wonder is it that the young fellow, who has gone up to the University with stedfast vows and upright resolutions, soon finds himself breaking them—buying boxes of cigars, which he can't smoke, though his friends can—attiring himself in splendid raiment, in which the *minimum* of taste is combined with the *maximum* of expense—covering his walls with proofs after letters which he cannot appreciate—loading his shelves with splendidly-bound copies of books, which he never opens, and has only bought because he is not required to pay for them—*enfin*, going to the bad most efficiently? This little comedy often lasts for three years, and then it is transformed most suddenly into a very dismal tragedy. The bland and courteous tradesman becomes unaccountably distant in his manner, and takes to correspondence through the intervention of his lawyer—a species of letter-writing which may be amusing enough to the writer, who loses nothing, but is not uproariously applauded by the reader, who has to pay three shillings coin of the realm for each epistle. Then comes the usual *finale*—college quitted without taking a degree, three years wasted beyond retrieving, and very often a life-time of regret. This is not all the fault of the college youth, let the rigid censor say what he will. If Master Goodchild were the invariable type of youth in Alma Mater family, then these scandals would not happen; but, unfortunately, human nature at nineteen is very weak, and it is very pleasant to live in a good set, to hunt twice

a-week on Simmons' clever hacks, to dine at the Mitre whenever the Proctor's eagle eye can be evaded, to entertain lady friends at Commemoration with gorgeous banquets, to drink rare wines (tasting much more, though, of the hedges than the butler, as some one says), to smoke cigars of price—in fact, to live the thoroughly Elysian life of a rich and idle University man, and what though the poor country clergyman has to scrape and contrive, and the sisters have to wear the same dresses year after year, Master Hopeful does not much trouble his head till the crash comes, and he has to go to his father, and break the good old man's heart with a shameful story of debt and disgrace. It is not altogether the fault of the men—there should be less temptation, ready-money should be demanded with more regularity, tutors should have some control over their pupils' expenditure, and the scandal would be lessened. The story of the man whose portrait has caused this long digression, is the story of many a promising man at the University. With an income of about one hundred and fifty pounds, he lived at the rate of five hundred a-year. A little game of loo would sometimes fill his pockets, and stave off some unreasonably anxious creditor—a lucky run at billiards would sometimes pay his college batch. He had no time to think; his life was a brilliant fever—one unceasing round of theatricals, wine parties, and other parties, at which the blinds were let down all Sunday long, and the rattling of the dice never stopped. Of course the end came. It always does. A bad, bitter end—rustication, a short career in London, exile to Hombourg, and one morning a body found in the quiet German wood, face downwards, and a pistol by its side. Time would fail me to go through with the dark catalogue, and the contrast between the bright, smiling faces which gleam out of the album, and the gloomy memory of their after-life, is too saddening; and time would fail to tell, as I had originally intended, of our dear friends in literature and art who have gone to the bad. Goldsmith, Motteux gasping out his heart's blood outside an evil house, killed in a drunken brawl; George Morland dying in hopeless poverty; Haydon flying from life in despair; and countless others. It is better to close the book, and to seek one's rest, having prayed the Father to keep me and all of you, my readers, from going to the bad.

## BAD MADE WORSE.

## A COMMON-PLACE STORY.

## PART IV.

"BOB," said my sister, "I think I am dying. I have no strength at all left; it is as much as I can do to drag myself along. Look how thin my arm is. I have strange noises in my ears, and things keep dancing before my eyes. I can't keep my attention fixed on any one subject for long together. If I try to think I merely bewilder myself. I have led a miserable life of late. For the last day or two I have had scarcely anything to eat. No, I am not hungry. I have a painful gnawing sensation, but food would choke me. Do hear me out. I am not too exhausted to speak; I am not, indeed. I have been wishing so to see you. I could not bear to meet my mother; I could not look her in the face. But I should be sorry to die without a kind word from some one who knew me in those dear old days that seem so long, long ago. Now that you are by me, I have nothing to wish for. I shall not be sorry to be gone. I am very tired, and I am a useless, wretched thing. I have never been of any good to anyone. Let me hold your hand, Bob. I am so glad to have met you. I want to tell you all that has happened. I have been so afraid that you would think me worse than I really am. No, please don't press me. When I have finished, I will eat and drink as much as you please, or at least as I can. I could not possibly swallow anything now. Oh, Bob, forgive me if you can. I have been a bad sister to you, but it has not been all my own fault."

I give my sister's story in her own words. It was with bitter self-reproach that I learnt how the cruel prophecy that I had hazarded in my passion had come true at last.

"You know why I married," said Kitty. "I did not really love James Harlowe; I did not really believe that he loved me. But I was a silly, conceited girl. I longed for change, and I wanted to shew my own cleverness in getting a husband with so much to recommend him as James Harlowe seemed to have. He was very good-looking, he had pleasant manners, he was of a respectable family, he had money, he treated me like a young lady,



he flattered my vanity, and made me feel proud of myself, he listened to what I said with attention, he never snubbed me, he took a pleasure in things that I was fond of, he never seemed ashamed of me, though I dressed poorly, and had shy, awkward manners, he brought sunshine and good-humour with him whenever he came, he was never sullen, he never preached, he never frowned me down. Besides all this, I was utterly wearied of the gloomy monotonous life we were leading in the cottage at South Lambeth. I was tired of my father's lectures and denunciations; I was tired of my mother's sorrowful face; I was tired of being told that everything in the world was vanity and vexation of spirit; I was tired of being a dowdy; I was tired of being treated like a fool. I wanted something to think about, something to interest me, something to love. When James Harlowe made his offer, I had no real affection for him, but I felt that if he were to go away, I should miss him very much. He was a conjuror, and had shewn me a glimpse of an entirely new life—a life that stretched away and away, and brightened as it lost itself in the golden mist of years to come. I did not love James Harlowe then, but he had dazzled me, and I believed that I should love him by-and-bye.

“For the first few weeks after our marriage I was very happy. My husband took me to the seaside. We led a calm, thoughtful, old world life in the darlingest little cottage imaginable. It was not a pretty house, but its peculiar shape and its broad bow-windows gave it a chubby contented look, and on a sunshiny day it seemed to smile and wink good-humouredly as you approached it. It was simply but neatly furnished, and had the brightest of papers on the walls, and the brightest of flowers in the verandah. I got by degrees quite to love it.

“My husband seemed very fond of me. I had but to express a wish, and it was gratified at once. He spent hours lying indolently by the water, or wandering slowly along the cliffs, I always by his side. He coaxed me to read to him, he tempted me to talk. We sate together at the piano, he playing vague dreamy melodies, I in a seventh heaven of happiness, with my arm laid lovingly on his shoulder. He had a full rich voice that moved me deeply. He sang without effort, perhaps without skill. But I knew nothing of music, and I felt that I could listen to him for ever. His softest tones had a singular clearness, they died away like the tender lingering chime of a bell. He sang quaint airy love songs, or tender, simple ballads, which rung in my ears long after the music had ceased. But some of the airs that he liked best contained abrupt transitions and sudden discords that to me were almost painful. It was as if a dark cloud came up and hid the sun, as if the warm summer breeze changed to the wind of

winter. I did not like those songs, but my husband laughed and said: 'You silly little Catarina, it is easy to see that you are no judge of music. These are the cleverest pieces of all. I am afraid you only care for very common-place harmonies, for a mawkish and cloying kind of sweetness.'

"It was a simple and happy life that which I led by the dear old sea.

"At night I heard the waves breaking solemnly on the beach, and as I watched the glorious sunsets, and the clouds rolling up, as I listened pleasurably and yet sadly to the moaning of the wind as it swept over the face of the waters, my imagination would carry me away over the broad deep, across the stormy sullen waves, with their white snow-crests, to those strange lands and dark solitary wastes of ocean that I had read about, and of which I had dreamed over my favourite books. I lay awe-struck on the bosom of that mysterious sea that floats around the Pole. I stood on a desert of frozen waters, with the icebergs around me, and the aurora-borealis hovering and flashing above my head. I watched the storm-birds screaming as they swept over the surf that flung itself wildly against the breakers. I heard the sea and the waves roaring, and witnessed in imagination the fate of many a great ship, for whose arrival we at home have waited day after day, week after week, hoping against hope, and of which not even a spar or a plank has escaped from the hungry waters. I travelled away to islands bright with flowers, and brilliant with foliage, having a deep blue sky above them, and a deep blue sea at their feet. I wandered round the stormy Cape. I hovered above dark solitary waters, overhung by rocks and grim mountains that stretched upwards and away, till their heads were lost in the clouds. Sometimes in my dreams I dived down to a strange fairy-land under the waves, a chill, silent, solemn region, where singular growths, half vegetable, half animal, were mingled with shells and coral, tall, slender, waving leaves, buried glittering treasures and 'dead men's bones.'

"But my mind is beginning to wander. I cannot bear to think of that happy time. Let me get back to my story.

"My misfortunes began when we came up to town. My husband had taken and furnished a house at Maida Hill. It was a pretty little place. I wandered in delight from room to room, everything was so bright and new and clean. My husband watched me with a satisfied smile. I turned and embraced him affectionately; 'You dear old thing,' I said, 'how good of you, I really believe you are a Cræsus in disguise.'

"He laughed, but there was an expression on his face that puzzled me. It set me thinking. I could not sleep that night.

I was restless, perhaps a little feverish from excitement. All sorts of strange ideas kept occurring to me. Question after question suggested itself. Matters that formerly had seemed of little consequence, now assumed an exaggerated importance. I worried myself in vain trying to answer my own doubts, to silence my misgivings. Of late I had often asked myself, and I asked myself now more anxiously than ever, from whence it could be that my husband got all his money. I had imagined that he was pretty well to do, nothing more, but he seemed absolutely rich. He denied neither me nor himself anything in reason or out of it; yet so far as I could ascertain we bought comparatively little on credit. We were never pestered with duns. James Harlowe had always plenty of money in his pocket. Directly a bill was presented, it was paid. I was puzzled. He called himself a barrister, but I knew that he was making nothing at his profession. He had told me himself that his private means were limited. He had no occupation that I could discover, and yet we lived not in comfort merely, but in luxury. I felt uneasy. There was a mystery that I must fathom; yet when I questioned my husband, he merely patted me on the head and laughed, and told me good-humouredly to 'mind my own business,' and when I would not be satisfied, and pressed him further, saying that I was not a child, and had a right to his confidence, a sudden frown swept over his face, he glared at me angrily, and pushed me from his side almost roughly.

"I was very much offended. I have a sullen, obstinate temper. My vanity was wounded. However fond I might be of my husband, I had all a girl's confidence in her own cleverness, and had fancied until now that I could twist him round my finger.

"I would not give in. If I said nothing, I at least shewed by my dogged silence that I would not extend my forgiveness till my curiosity had been satisfied. I made myself as disagreeable as I could. I would not talk, I would not smile, I would not be interested in anything. If my husband spoke so that I was obliged to answer him, I replied with gruff sounds rather than words. James Harlowe looked at me steadily for a moment, and then took up the newspaper. Presently he put on his hat and went out of doors. He did not return till late in the evening. I was more sullen than ever.

"By degrees a coldness sprang up between my husband and myself. Neither of us would yield. 'I can't stand the sulks,' he said; 'you are a very pretty girl, but you have a nasty temper. Don't try to bully me; you won't succeed. I hate a glum face. If you don't make home pleasant, I shall be obliged to go and amuse myself elsewhere.'



“ ‘Go,’ I said in a passion, ‘and don’t try to bully *me*; I can be as disagreeable and obstinate as you are yourself.’

“ He lighted a candle and went upstairs whistling a tune.

“ ‘Look here,’ he said a day or two afterwards, ‘I can’t have your father and mother always poking about here as they do. I can’t stand the old gentleman’s sermons, and one mistress in a house is quite enough. Give the worthy couple a hint that they are not wanted. Draw it as mild as you like, but let there be no mistake about it.’

“ I was amazed at the change in my husband’s manner. ‘James,’ I cried in a fury, ‘I will not hear my father and mother spoken of in such terms. They shall come here as often as they please. If you are the master of the house, I am its mistress.’

“ ‘Very well,’ returned my husband, ‘if you won’t say anything yourself, I suppose I must take the job off your shoulders.’

“ He did so. We quarrelled.

“ In the course of a few months I began almost to hate my husband. ‘You are tired of me,’ I said angrily.

“ ‘Yes, I know I am,’ he answered tranquilly; ‘I am fickle. I had a fancy for you when I married you. You were a pretty girl, and different from the girls I had been used to. I confess that for some time I was awfully spoony on you. I really thought of reforming, and turning a steady, respectable member of society, and all that sort of thing. But I found out that *you* had a nasty temper, and I changed my mind. But I don’t think it was all your fault. I believe I should get tired of any woman in six months.’

“ I threw myself on to the sofa and burst into tears. My husband began playing with the canaries at the window.

“ James Harlowe was fond of giving little parties. I did not like the people who came to them. They were like and yet unlike the aristocracy I had read about in books. They had all their arrogance but none of their grace or refinement. The ladies dressed flauntingly, and had high complexions. Some of them talked French, but no English. The gentlemen were most of them young; they conducted themselves in a cavalier manner towards persons of the opposite sex. They were loud-voiced and laughed a good deal. They threw themselves at full length on the sofa, and tumbled the cushions unceremoniously on to the floor. They complimented the ladies in extravagant terms. They treated my husband with strange familiarity—almost with contempt, cut him short when speaking, and altered his arrangements at their will. He behaved towards them with diffidence, greeted their jokes with a smile even when they were levelled at himself,

and received his guests on their arrival with a bow, seldom venturing to extend his hand. I imagined that they must be very great people indeed, but I could not understand how we came to be concerned with the aristocracy at all. I was introduced to these gentlemen, but I could not catch their names. I seemed to puzzle them as much as they puzzled me. They began to talk to me, but I could not understand them. My voice faltered as I tried to answer them, and the colour mounted in my face. They became suddenly silent, rose, and left me with a bow. I supposed that I must have offended them, but I could not tell in what way. My husband frowned at me, whispered savagely that I was a fool, and asked me why I didn't 'take my cue?' But I turned from him disdainfully, and I fancied that the gentlemen, though they spoke to me less, began to treat me with more respect than formerly.

"There was a lady, a guest of my husband's, whom I disliked to a degree. She was a tall, dark woman, with a fine figure, perfectly formed features, hard, cold eyes, and a closely set mouth with thin lips. She dressed richly and showily, had the most perfect self-possession, talked without ceasing, and treated me with unconcealed contempt. She addressed me once or twice in a condescending way, but I could not understand her. I believe she imagined that she was speaking English. But my native tongue under her manipulation became as unintelligible as her own French.

"My husband behaved towards her with great attention. I watched him jealously. When we were alone I reproached him. He answered me carelessly and contemptuously. He owned that Madame Hélène, as the creature called herself, was a favourite of his. 'She is my right hand,' he said; 'I do not know what I should do without her. She is a very clever woman. She is never in the sulks. She knows how to play her little game. She never bores one.'

" 'I won't have that Madame Hélène, as you call her, come to the house again,' I cried in a passion.

" 'Nonsense,' said my husband tranquilly, 'I shall do as I please. You may go back home if you like—you are not a bit of use to me here. I am tired of you. I tell you plainly I can't afford to quarrel with Madame Hélène. If she chose to hold up her little finger I should be a ruined man. Don't jump to conclusions. There is nothing between us. You may watch us if you like as much as you please.'

"But there was a gentleman who used to come to our parties whom I rather liked. He was so different from any of the others. He was a very handsome man, not at all in the style of my husband. He had a quiet, grave, thoughtful air, and a very intel-

lectual cast of countenance. He made me think of the Count of Monte Cristo. I fancied that he must be a great philosopher, or a celebrated writer, or a politician. He never laughed, and when he spoke it was in a deep, soft musical voice, that was almost sorrowful, but very soothing. When he saw that I always sate in a corner by myself, that I seemed quite lost, and that nobody took any notice of me, he approached respectfully and began talking in a way that gained my attention and confidence at once. He did not pay me any compliments, he did not try to be lively or amusing, but he treated me as I had never been treated before in that house, quite as a lady. He spoke on home topics, the only subjects in which I had really any interest. In that hot, noisy room, amid the chattering of those bold foreign creatures, and the empty laughter of the silly young men who paid court to them, his words were as refreshing as a breath of pure country air."

My sister continued her story, and I heard her in sorrowful, pitying silence. I had not the heart to blame her. I have not the heart to write down all she told me. I bowed my head, but still kept her hand firmly clasped in mine. I felt that I was in part responsible for her sufferings and her sin. She heaped reproaches on herself, more bitter than any that I could have dared to shape into words.

And yet she could plead excuses—excuses that she urged timidly but anxiously, as if she could not hear herself condemned in silence, and yet knew well how weak was any defence that she could offer.

"Oh, Bob," she continued, "I was in a sore straight. My husband had deserted me; I had lost the confidence of my father and mother; I was without a single friend, almost without an acquaintance. The only person from whom I could expect a word of comfort or sympathy was Sir Reginald Sleigh. I made a few weak attempts to avoid him; I tried weakly to forget him; but I was loath to break with the only being who treated me as a woman should be treated, who compassionated me, who saw that I did not really belong to the Comus crew amid which he had found me. I had nothing to distract my thoughts from the one absorbing, dangerous topic. I had lost all appetite for books. I had no wholesome pursuits. I had nothing to look forward to. I was the wife of a professional gambler—the nominal mistress of a hell. I had sunk so low that it seemed impossible to sink any further. I was in despair. What inducement had I to struggle resolutely to reject the only source of comfort that still remained to me? No one cared for me, no one showed me any consideration, no one would acknowledge that I had any claim upon him. My husband paraded his profligacy in my own house, under my very eyes.



My father had forbidden my name to be mentioned. What to me was the opinion of the world in whose sight I was already degraded? Why should I be scrupulous in respect to duty towards others when those who were my natural protectors had ignored their duty towards me altogether? How could those who had discarded me claim fidelity and self-sacrifice in return? There was no visible hope of my husband amending. If I stayed with him I should be condemning myself to a life of the most abject humiliation. If I left him openly, whither could I go, how could I support myself? I could not return to the parents who had rejected me. I had no resources of my own. I was helpless and penniless. No; if I would attain to a higher and purer life, I had but one path open to me. It was through sin; but the end that I had in view, the greater evil from which I fled, surely were a sufficient justification of my conduct. So I reasoned then, but I have lived long enough to see the fallacy of my own arguments. I loved Sir Reginald with all my soul—with a love that never returns—with a love that, in my girlish ignorance and flippancy of spirit, I had believed impossible. And I knew that my passion was returned: not in the form of a shallow, momentary *penchant* by a scoundrel like my husband, but by a sincere, loving spirit, as I then imagined, who realised my perplexities and sorrows, and had no more selfish aim than to restore me to a position at least akin to that from which I had fallen.

“But, though I contemplated a great sin, accident saved me from its commission.

“I am ingrainedly jealous. I did not love my husband. I absolutely hated him: but the sight of Madame Hélène wrought me to a frenzy. It was madness to me that I should be treated with such utter contempt; that another woman should calmly and wrongfully arrogate to herself that to which I was entitled by right—that of which the law forbade anyone but me the possession. If the wife had lost the husband’s love, it was yet not to be borne that it should be given to a stranger.

“One day I turned upon James Harlowe, and reproached him wildly with his infidelity.

“‘And pray, madame,’ said he, ‘who are you that you should give yourself such airs? What claim upon me have you more than any other woman?’

“‘I am your wife,’ I said.

“‘You are not,’ he retorted. ‘Madame Hélène is my wife.’

“I laughed scornfully.

“‘You ought to be ashamed of yourself,’ I cried, ‘for attempting to impose upon me with such a silly falsehood.’

“‘It is the truth!’ he shouted, savagely, ‘I swear it. I am

as vile as you are yourself. I am a bigamist, and you—well, I am not a child that I should call you names. But Sir Reginald Sleigh is your lover as I was once. You go your way and I will go mine, or, if you prefer it, you may publish your disgrace to the world, and everyone shall know that the virtuous Kitty Sanders was the mistress of James Harlowe, *alias* Robert Hitchcock, ex-billiard-marker, professional gambler, and scoundrel.’

“He burst into a wild laugh. I fell to the ground in a fainting fit.

“I left my husband and my home. I fled the country. England was hateful to me—a land of misery and disgrace. I accompanied Sir Reginald to Italy. But I was a poor companion. The dead sea fruit turned to ashes in my mouth. I had lost all the little gaiety I had once possessed. I was listless, silent, and gloomy. My lover frequently found me in tears. I pined and sate for hours, looking out sorrowfully at the broad sea that stretched away into the clouds, dreaming of what might have been and had not been. I was sick of life. Nothing interested me. I was feverish, irritable, exacting. Everything that I touched, everything to which I appealed in hopes of relief seemed full of mute memories of the innocent days of a wretch who could never be innocent again. A fierce restlessness seized me. I hurried my lover from place to place. But there was no peace for me; and I saw that my protector wearied of me. I watched him jealously, and it was plain to me that his regards were fixing themselves elsewhere. And I would not wait to be dismissed, but packed up the few things of which I had need, and left his house secretly, and came back here to die. I longed to see some one who had known me in the old time, who would not turn from me in horror and disgust, who would give me a kind word before I set out on my long, long journey, and I have been gratified. God be thanked. I have sought you, Bob, for these many weeks past. I did not dare appeal to my mother. I had no one to help me in my search. But Providence is good, and I have found you after all. I shall be glad to die—I am ashamed to live. I am utterly tired out. My eyes are heavy with the sleep of death. Kiss me, Bob. I am a miserable wretch. I have brought disgrace on you and yours, but say you forgive me.”

\* \* \* \* \*

I lifted my sister gently from the seat, bade her lean on my shoulder, and with my assistance she dragged herself along to the Park Gate. I put her into a cab, despite her remonstrances, and accompanied her to her lodging.

It was a miserable room, scarcely better than an empty garret, without a token of comfort or cheerfulness. It was scrupulously neat and clean, but oh, so bare and cold.

Tears blinded my eyes; I tried to repress my sobs, and they nearly choked me.

I placed my sister tenderly on the mattress, which with a single blanket formed her bed. I went out and bought her some food. When I came back she was sleeping, quite worn out, scarcely breathing. I knelt down by the curtainless window and prayed long and fervently.

Presently I went below stairs and spoke to the landlady. She was a dirty, hard-featured and hard-voiced, brandy-nosed woman, and on my paying a deposit she agreed reluctantly that I should be allowed a room in the house.

"It was a very suspicious case," she grumbled, "but money was money. She trusted I wasn't deceiving her. Why didn't the young woman upstairs get some work and live respectable like? She (Mrs. Abchurch) had been took in once or twice before. Hers was a respectable house, and some folks in the neighbourhood had an eye upon her and was mighty particular. Well, if it must be, it must. And as long as we paid and was quiet, it didn't much matter to *her*."

I restrained my passion as well as I could. I had only a few pounds left, my sister was helpless, and I could not afford to indulge in the luxury of pride.

I wrote to Kobbold. My compunctions vanished in the face of my pressing need. He returned me what I thought a cold note, making an appointment at his house for a certain hour the following morning.

I hastened to Northumberland Street with all speed, arrived twenty minutes too soon, walked anxiously about the neighbouring streets, and in due time rang the bell, was admitted and shewn into the dining-room.

Presently the door opened, and there entered—not Kobbold, but his wife. My heart sank within me directly I saw her. "My husband has shewn me your note," she said; "I have undertaken to answer it. You will please to send him no more begging petitions. You will never come inside this house again. Go. If you trouble us any more, it will be a matter for the police."

She rang the bell. I was shewn out. The man-servant whispered something to me, but I knew not what. It might have been an insult, it might have been some commonplace remark on no more important topic than a speck of dirt on my coat. I was in such a whirl of passion that words fell on my ears unheeded.

I had tasted no breakfast. I went into a public-house and bought a biscuit and a glass of ale. I took up a newspaper. By the merest accident I stumbled upon an advertisement that enlisted my attention at once. It was for an usher at a school;



at a school, too, within a few yards of the house where I was living with my sister. The salary offered was larger than I should have expected. Oh, that I could obtain the appointment; it would be a perfect godsend, and in the meantime I might be on the lookout for something better. I had never been at school; I had the vaguest notion in the world of the scope of an usher's duties.

I paid my threepence, and for fear I should be forestalled, hurried off at once to Burnaby Lodge, knocked modestly at the door, and inquired of a slipshod maid-of-all-work if I could see Mr. Newington, the principal.

She answered "Yes; would I walk in?" and pushing open a door left me to spend five anxious minutes in a fusty parlour, of which the predominant colour was brown. Tables, chairs, books, map, globes, carpet—all seemed to have been steeped in a kind of liquid snuff.

Mr. Newington was a tall, thin, solemn-looking man, with a bald head, protruding eyes, an impressive demeanour, and a sepulchral voice. He received me with civility, and spoke as if some one were lying dead in the next room. He rather prepossessed me. There was nothing overbearing or harsh in his manner. He said that he should be very glad to enlist the services of a really educated and conscientious assistant. "My under-masters," he observed, "have been a sore trouble to me. I have done my best to secure trustworthy persons, but most of them have been singularly wanting in tact, refinement, and proper feeling. You certainly labour under this disqualification, that you lack experience, but I should be sorry to say 'no' to an applicant who is plainly a gentleman, and who would, no doubt, being a scholar, feel a genuine interest in his work. My own post is one of great responsibility, that of my assistant is scarcely less so. Persons in my position have much to answer for. The influence of a teacher makes itself felt more or less through the entire life of the pupil. Testimonials, my dear sir, I shall not require. Your manner is a sufficient guarantee of your sincerity. I distrust formal recommendations. I can see at a glance that you are no needy adventurer. There is that about you which bespeaks a man of modesty and merit. I may be deceived, but I feel that my confidence is not misplaced. I have little doubt but that you will give me all the satisfaction in your power."

I was delighted. I hastened joyfully home—or I had better say, to my lodgings—and told my sister of my good fortune. I would say nothing about Kobbold for fear I should distress her. She clasped my hand in her own poor, thin fingers, and smiled at me affectionately. "You dear old thing," she murmured; "and

you have done all this for my sake. I must seem such an ungrateful hussy. I find some one cares for me, after all. You put new life into me. I should try and get better if I did not feel that I should be a disgrace and an encumbrance to you."

"Kitty," I said, "you ought not to talk like that. There is nothing that I long for so much as to see you well and strong again."

"Bob," murmured my sister, "I had a dear little baby once, but it died—oh, so soon!—and when the light faded from its tiny blue eyes, I thought that I had nobody at all left to love me, and I wished that I might die too. I knew that I was a wicked thing, and that my darling had its home among the angels; but God is good, and I fancied that I might be allowed to watch my baby boy from afar off. But I know now that there is one person who has never forgotten me, and that is you, dear Bob. Oh, I wish we had always loved one another as you love me now. If you really think I can be of any use to you, if you can really forgive me, I will try and get well from this moment. But I am so weak. When I go to sleep I feel as if I should never have strength to wake up again, and it seems a greater trouble to me to walk to-day than it was yesterday."

\* \* \* \* \*

Let me hasten on. It was terrible drudgery, that school life. Mr. Newington, I found, did little or nothing, but he seemed a civil, well-meaning man. I rose before daylight, and retired after the shops had been shut. But I did not grumble. I felt that my powers were failing me fast, but I thought of my sister, and resolved to toil on under the weight of my harness, if need be, till death.

But a time came when I had no money left. I consoled myself with the reflection that in another twenty-four hours a portion of my salary would be due. My sister, who for some weeks past had been improving in health, had just suffered a relapse. She seemed rapidly sinking. It was urgent that I should have money without delay.

When the appointed hour arrived, I waited upon my employer. He seemed disturbed at my visit. "I am really very sorry," he began. I knew what was coming. I interrupted the plausible excuses in despair. "My sister is dying," I exclaimed; "I have not a sixpence left."

"I am really very much grieved," answered the schoolmaster; "in another day or two I shall be able to pay you in full. I shall even be in a position to advance you money, if necessary. But at present it is quite out of my power to do anything. I have had, within the last week or two, a great many calls upon me—calls of

a kind that it was impossible to neglect. If you like to wait a little while longer, I can safely promise that your claims will be satisfied; if you are indisposed to agree to any such arrangement, you have your remedy in law, but I doubt whether you will gain any advantage in point of time by hostile measures."

I left that fusty front-parlour in dismay. I wrote first to Kobbold, then to Fitzjames Harvey. To leave no stone unturned I wrote also to my Uncle Randolph.

The schoolmaster was considerate enough to let me have some food from his table, and to take away a liberal allowance of cold stewed beefsteak and bread for my sister. But, poor thing, she could not swallow the meat, and as it had lost all its gravy it was worthless for broth.

By return of post came a note from Kobbold. "Dear old chap," it ran, "I found out the scandalous way in which my wife had treated you, and let her know that in future I intended to be my own master. I have not a sixpence in my possession now, but you may rely upon receiving a P.O.O. for five pounds by Wednesday morning. I am deeply sorry for you. Why haven't you written to me before? I had no notion where to find you. Why didn't you meet me at the place I mentioned to you through the footman? I fancied that my wife might be up to some of her pranks, and if I had not been absolutely obliged to go into the country I should have waited to see you myself."

"Mr. Sanders," said the schoolmaster just as I finished reading the above-quoted letter, "these are prize books. Would you be good enough to take them home with you this evening, and copy into them in a clear, legible hand the names and addresses that I have written on these papers. If I have the books back by the day after to morrow I shall be satisfied."

"Don't tell me," I heard my landlady screaming as I ascended the stairs to my room, "if you can't pay out you go; that's flat. You and that young man of yours ain't the kind of lodgers I cares to have, at least if you want to be running tick. Mine's a respectable house. Now Mr. What's-your-name," she continued turning to me, "I have let it run on more than a fortnight, and if it ain't settled at once out you goes. No money, indeed! Don't you get paid, man? Why, what's them books? None o'mine? No, nor of yours either, I'll be bound. Rubbish, you and your books too. A post office order the day after to-morrow? No; it's money now that I wants; none o' your pie-crust promises. Well, if you are sure of help why not pledge them there books? No one'll be a bit the wiser. I tell you plainly if you don't pay me out you goes. A party's been inquiring after the rooms, and I have let them over your head. Leastwise I will,



for he is downstairs, if you don't let me see seven and sixpence this blessed night. Ah, mister, you need'nt look fierce; I have one or two as will help me if you tries the bullying dodge."

I had no resource. Full of bitter humiliation I shrunk out of that cursed den, the books under my arm. But I was too late. "Just closing," cried the young man at the pawnbroker's; but seeing my look of dismay he altered his tone, and said civilly that if I came early the next morning I might be sure of receiving attention.

I write what follows with a sense of bitter disgrace. But if I had not committed a theft my sister would have been turned out into the streets on a night when snow was on the ground. Surely if I might rely on receiving five pounds by the day after to-morrow I could sell the three prize dictionaries at a second-hand book-stall and redeem them before they were wanted. I did so. I paid my landlady; but all that night and the next day and the night following I was in a fever. Morning came, and the postman tapped at the doors on each side of us, but not at our own. I hurried away to the school in a forlorn hope that the promised remittance had been sent to my other address. It was a holiday, and the pupils did not assemble till ten o'clock, at which time they were to hear an address from the principal. To my unspeakable joy—a joy that nearly resulted in a fainting fit—I found the letter that I had scarcely expected, but had hoped for against hope, lying on the edge of my desk. I was saved!

No.

"Mr. Sanders," said the schoolmaster, "I have a painful duty to perform. I am sorry to be obliged in the presence of my pupils to accuse a teacher, for whom I had considerable respect, and in whom I placed the most implicit confidence, of theft. This morning Simpson, jun., as he was passing a bookstall in Cavendish Road, fancied that he recognised three new Latin-English dictionaries that were exposed—somewhat prematurely as you may be inclined to think—for sale ——"

I heard no more; I became insensible.

\* \* \* \* \*

P.S. My name is Kobbold; I am a friend of Robert Sanders; I have known him for some years. When I got to Burnaby Lodge I found him in a dead faint. Didn't I give it the schoolmaster, the old rogue! Hang the legal justice of the case. Well, he has agreed to say no more about the matter—a very wise plan, especially as poor Bob has foregone any claim to his arrears of salary. How much do you think was owing to him? Three pounds ten, and that for a quarter's work! Good heavens! Harvey has just come back from Lincolnshire. We are going to

set our wits to work about poor Bob. He won't starve now, you may depend upon that. I am sure his sister will recover if she only has proper attention. Hurrah! We will have quite a jollification—the whole lot of us—when we have managed to get things a bit square again.

P.S. (No. 2.) What do you think now? Old Trower, the Manchester chap, has bolted. An awful rogue. Forgery and embezzlement, or something of that sort. The police are after him. I daresay you will find further particulars in the special edition of this evening's paper.

P.S. (No. 3.) Who do you think has turned up now? Guess. Sir Reginald Sleigh! Had been looking for Kitty Sanders everywhere. Couldn't understand why she had left him. A very gentlemanly fellow. I never saw a chap so cut up as he was when he found her lying ill on the sofa. James Harlowe died exactly a fortnight ago, in a very mysterious way; that Frenchwoman is supposed to have had something to do with it, but I had no patience to wait for particulars. I heard Sir Reginald talking to Bob, and he declared that he would marry his sister directly she was a bit better. He may not be a man of much principle, but he is not a bad sort of fellow. If he is going to do what the world thinks foolish, he is also going to do what his conscience tells him is right. If there were more imprudent people and fewer deliberate rogues I don't know but what society might be a little better off than it is.

Moral? Stories in these days have not got a moral, or morals either (Fitzjames Harvey wrote *that*; *I* didn't); or if they have it is one that does not appear on the surface.

You have heard the last of Bob Sanders and Kitty. Neither of them were very wise, neither of them were very good; but they suffered for their faults and their follies; and if they were not heroic or even particularly interesting characters, at least they were the sort of people you meet in everyday life.

THE END.







REV. J. MARTINEAU.

## CLERICAL CELEBRITIES.

## IX.—MR. MARTINEAU AND ARCHDEACON DENISON.

WE must travel, if you please, into what has been called "un-orthodox London," in order to meet with the gentleman whose name stands at the head of this page. Mr. Martineau, brother of the strong-minded lady to whom in our childhood we were indebted for those wonderful stories which administered strong meat fit for grown men in the guise of milk for babies, and who has since devoted her time to the discussion of every conceivable social and political topic, from the laws regulating supply and demand to the causes of hydrophobia, is not a member of any orthodox religious body. Of course you know what orthodoxy is. It is "my doxy," and heterodoxy is everybody else's. Mr. Martineau, accordingly, it is to be presumed, does not teach the doctrines which we are in the habit of accepting. His name is associated with the ugly word Unitarian, and by not a few devout and worthy people he is regarded not only as the teacher of untruths, which it is possible that he is, but as one of those men who are beyond the pale of Christianity, and with whom it is not proper for the orthodox to hold even the most distant communion. But if Mr. Martineau's name is comparatively little known, and is still less liked amongst the orthodox Christians of England, it holds a high place in the esteem of the English-speaking people on the further side of the Atlantic. It would doubtless astonish the excellent members of many of our churches and sects were they to be told that whilst their own favourite preachers, men who can fill our churches and chapels in any part of England, at any hour during the week, are altogether unknown to the American people, the Rev. James Martineau, minister of the dingy little chapel in Little Portland Street, holds a place amongst the preachers to whom the American people are wont to come for guidance and teaching, hardly, if at all, inferior to that occupied by such men as Channing and Theodore Parker. Fame, it would appear, is a matter which does not always consist in mere notoriety; and this preacher, who certainly does not appear to receive an undue amount of honour in his own country, but who preaches Sunday by Sunday to a congregation of a few score of men and women, exercises infinitely more influence upon the thought of a great people than that which is wielded by other preachers who shall be nameless, and who have the opportunity every Sunday of addressing an audience that may be counted by the thousand.

The story of the present writer's adventures in search of Mr. Martineau when he desired to hear him might be told at length as a

fair sample of the sufferings which have been endured by any man who enters upon a series of pilgrimages for the purpose of listening to the "Clerical Celebrities" of London. In the first place, though constantly, like most other persons residing in the western suburbs, in the habit of visiting Regent Street, he had a very dim idea of the whereabouts of Mr. Martineau's chapel. "You'll find it somewhere at the back of Regent Street," said a friend to whom he confided his difficulty. At the back of Regent Street accordingly he sought it, and sought in vain. One whole Sunday morning was spent in a series of entrances into divers little tabernacles nestling in the purlieus of Portland Street, some of which appeared to be devoted to the rites of that curious religious body known in Scotland as the "Cauld Kail Kirk," and others of which might, for anything we could ascertain to the contrary, have been Mormon or Shaker meeting-houses. Armed with fuller and better information on the following Sunday, he succeeded not only in discovering Little Portland Street, but in gaining admittance to the chapel where Mr. Martineau generally preaches. Here, however, a fresh disappointment awaited him. He had been told that the congregation usually worshipping in Little Portland Street Chapel was so small that there could never be any difficulty as to his obtaining a seat. But now he found the building crowded to the doors, and he had to content himself with a seat in a little vestry, where, stifled by the heat, he was able to command a view of the pulpit through an open window. In due time, after the reading of a set of prayers which can only be described as exquisitely beautiful in language, and pure and lofty in sentiment, some one who was *not* Mr. Martineau appeared in the pulpit. He was a dark-featured gentleman, apparently about forty years of age, and he spoke with what seemed to be a Scotch accent. There was nothing in his sermon to call for special notice, except the fact that he made use of one or two somewhat curious phrases. These, however, were so few in number, that it was not until the preacher had reached the final passage of his address that the writer discovered that he had been listening for half an hour to ———, an unconverted Brahmin! All that he can say by way of parenthesis with respect to this sermon is, that he has upon many occasions heard sermons infinitely less thoughtful and less replete with the true Christian spirit, from men of whose birth in Christian England, of whose ordination at the hands of a duly appointed bishop, and of whose unquestionable orthodoxy there could be no manner of doubt. Yet another disappointment was in store for the writer when, on a subsequent occasion, he again found himself amongst the worshippers at Little Portland Street Chapel, and had listened to a sermon which, excellent though it was, still was not a sermon by



Mr. Martineau. It was not until the third time that he seated himself within the walls of the little building that he at last obtained the object which he had all along had in view.

The congregation which meet every Sunday morning at this head-quarters of Unitarianism in England—for we presume that the place where a Unitarian minister of Mr. Martineau's reputation preaches must deserve that title—is, as we have already said, a very small one. But no one can look round amongst the men who are to be seen there without feeling that it is anything but an ordinary congregation in point of character. More than one member of Parliament was to be seen in it that Sunday morning, and there were also present one or two men of wide fame and influence, who would hardly have been induced to listen to the ministrations of any ordinary preacher. There were also amongst those seated in the chapel, some who had evidently but recently crossed the Atlantic; whilst even those altogether unknown to fame were for the most part, if we might judge by outward appearances, very different persons to those to be met with in places where popular preachers of the ordinary type are holding forth.

It is not difficult to understand how it is that Mr. Martineau is, as a preacher, "caviare to the general" after he has been once or twice listened to. For though his written sermons are in themselves admirable compositions, and cannot fail to command the admiration of all who have become acquainted with them, it is but few persons who can appreciate those sermons as they are uttered. Read in the leisure and quiet of the library, they may be understood and appreciated; but it is a different matter when the subtle ideas and involved arguments in which they abound have to be grasped during the half-hour of their delivery from the pulpit. The ordinary hearer going to listen to Mr. Martineau will find himself left completely behind by the preacher, who wanders away through distant regions of thought, to which it is impossible for a man not thoroughly accustomed to his style, to follow him at a moment's notice. We need not wonder, therefore, at the fact that he has a small congregation. The wonder rather is that he has one so large as that which even now listens to him.

And yet the only drawback to the pleasure of listening to his sermons, from an intellectual point of view, is that they are too good. They are too profound to be grasped at the moment of their utterance. But how well worthy of being grasped they after all are! They abound with striking and beautiful thoughts; and they are animated by a hope, as noble as it is pure, with respect to the future of our race. Even the manner of the preacher is in itself attractive; for Mr. Martineau delivers his sermons with a quiet force and dignity infinitely more impressive than the vehement gestures and loud tones too often seen in the pulpit.

We have alluded to the prayers which are used at the service of the Little Portland Street Chapel. We confess that we were somewhat surprised to find these prayers, which are in themselves compositions remarkable for their beauty, filled with allusions to our Saviour couched in language to which it was hardly possible even for the most orthodox of Christians to take objection. The divinity of the Lord appeared to be fully acknowledged in them, and it was for His sake that the various petitions were asked. This is not the place in which to enter into any minute consideration of the actual differences between the doctrines held by Unitarians, like Mr. Martineau, and Trinitarians. Those differences cannot, however, be so great as some people are in the habit of supposing; and it is at least gratifying to find that there is no distinctive feature of Mr. Martineau's teaching which is made more manifest in his sermons than that large-souled charity which prevents him setting himself up in judgment upon his brother, and that strong optimism which leads him to look upon the good rather than the evil which is to be found in mankind.

Archdeacon Denison! The very name is associated in the minds of not a few of our readers with conflicts waged with varying success upon many a field. The Vicar of East Brent has, we imagine, been the hero of more ecclesiastical battles than any other churchman of our times. He has fought with his fellow-churchmen; he has fought with Nonconformists; he has fought with Roman Catholics; he has fought with Mr. Gladstone; he has fought with the entire press of the United Kingdom; and if ever a man deserved the name of "the fighting archdeacon," he does. And yet, though he has been in so many battles, we venture to say that there is hardly in all England a man who is more generally respected than the Archdeacon of Taunton. A finer specimen of the English gentleman it would certainly be difficult to meet with; nor could a more frank and open foe be wished for. We need not be surprised, therefore, when we find that even those who have had fierce theological conflicts with him, and have therefore known how well he can use the weapons he has at his command, are inclined to regard him with a friendliness which, as a rule, theological rivals and adversaries certainly do not show for each other.

Archdeacon Denison is a man who must often have been studied by Mr. Trollope when he was bent upon preparing those wonderful clerical portraits which abound in some of his novels. And yet Mr. Trollope has never succeeded in giving his readers a full-length portrait of the Archdeacon. Hints there are in his sketches of some of the better class of clergymen, to whom he



ARCHDEACON DENISON.





introduces the reader, that remind one of the Vicar of East Brent. But they are only hints ; for no figure, at once so manly and yet so church-manly (if we may coin an ugly word), moves across Mr. Trollope's pages from first to last. The Archdeacon is, we fear, almost the last type of a race of men whom the Church can ill-afford to lose. A gentleman by birth, and by instinct and training, he adds to the qualities with which he is thus endowed an earnestness in the cause of the Church, which, though it is happily often exhibited by others, seldom makes its appearance in the precise form in which it shows itself in the Archdeacon. In him it assumes the form of a professional zeal and enthusiasm as great as that which a soldier displays on the field of battle. Everything for the Church is his motto ; and in carrying out that motto he never allows any question of his own comfort to obtrude itself ; but he labours with a restless industry which shows how thorough is his faith in the work in which he is engaged, and in the good which is to spring from it.

There are some people who are inclined to accuse the Archdeacon of intolerance ; and we cannot pretend to deny that he has given some reason for such a charge. But, after all, his intolerance is intolerance which hurts nobody. To a man of Archdeacon Denison's simple faith and boundless zeal, the idea that any views, save those which he himself holds, can be right, never appears to occur. But, so long as the intolerance is of this open and unconcealed description, and so long as everybody knows what to expect from the Vicar of East Brent, we cannot see that any one can complain of the manner in which the venerable gentleman carries out his own views at the expense of those of other people. That he is ready himself, when occasion need be, to submit to any sacrifice and cost rather than flinch from the principles which he holds, was proved by the manner in which he resisted the attempt to deprive him of his preferments on account of his peculiar teachings. For him there is no question of expediency. He flies his flag of "No Surrender," even when the vessel appears to be going down, and he is withal as cheerful and confident under those circumstances as though he were assured of victory.

It is not, however, his zeal, or his proneness to extreme High Church views, or the admirable manner in which he carries out his duties as a parish priest, or even that remarkable combativeness so strongly developed in his character, which has made the Archdeacon's name a household word all over England. The reason is rather to be found in the homely wit which he always has at command. Take up what the newspapers call "one of Archdeacon Denison's characteristic epistles," and the chances are ten to one in favour of your finding something in it to make you smile—some broad touch of a humour which is often grotesque, but always effective. It

may be that you laugh at the writer himself—but what of that? It was his intention to put the matter in that humorous light which is always, he knows, the one most pleasing to the ordinary Englishman, and he cares not whether he does so at the expense of himself or anybody else. Then, apart from his humour, the Archdeacon's ideas are always so full of originality that they cannot fail to attract attention. Some of his quaint sayings are worthy of becoming proverbs. Take, for instance, his remark about "the nasty, mean, little virtue of prudence." Archdeacon Denison never said a happier thing than this. And certainly there is no man living who was better entitled to speak of the favourite virtue of the present day in this manner, for of prudence he does not possess one single particle. Equally noteworthy is the cool manner in which the Archdeacon rushes out to parley with his foes on the eve of a battle. He is ready—no man is readier—for blows when the time for blows comes; but in the meantime, he is anxious to see whether he cannot secure some preliminary advantage by words, and he consequently occasionally takes steps, the very simplicity of which is irresistibly amusing. This was shown when he wrote to Mr. Gladstone, begging him to tell him all about the Church Rate Bill long before the Government had introduced it, in order that he might be prepared to oppose it when it came on! Who but Archdeacon Denison would ever have dreamt of taking such a step as this? This amusing simplicity shows itself throughout all his actions, however. Brave as a lion, he is, at the same time, as simple as a child. The consequence, as may be readily foreseen, is that he very often finds himself in very peculiar positions.

Upon the whole, he may be looked upon as an admirable type of the whole class of country rectors; gentlemen whose views are as sound as their port, and who enforce their teaching by an open-handed liberality which is in itself a valuable agent in the work in which they are engaged. But, in addition to being a member of this class, Archdeacon Denison is also something more. He has great ability as well as that superabundant zeal to which we have already alluded, and in his determination to do all that he can do for the Church to which he belongs, he will suffer no obstacle to bar his path. It is true that his views are not the views held by very many of his fellow-churchmen; and it is equally true that, upon many points, the tide of public opinion has been slowly beating back, for many years, the barriers which he has set up. But, as a man who does not know what it is to acknowledge himself beaten, we may rest assured that Archdeacon Denison will pursue to the end the path which he has followed so long; and will never cease to appear upon the stage as the defender of the rights of the Church, so long as the Church has any rights left to be defended.



## NO APPEAL.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

“POPULUS VULT DECIPI, DECIPIATUR.”

“‘I will amuse myself,’ he cries, ‘and where the world  
Finds rapture, I will seek oblivion.’”—BANNISTER.

FITZGERALD had been more than a fortnight in London, and during this time had tried many of the various amusements with which the idle man seeks to while away his heavy hours, and spend his superfluous cash. But he found the task of idling far harder, far more expensive, and far more useless than he had imagined it possibly could be. He went to exhibitions, to morning concerts, and evening recitations, but the pictures seemed only repetitions of what he had seen before, the music tame, or, worse still, vulgar, while the gentlemen who read Shakespeare and Dickens seemed to understand the majestic wisdom of the one as little as the humour of the other.

Then he tried that most favourite of all his old resorts, the Museum of the College of Surgeons—a place, where in former days he had spent many a pleasant hour. But even that choice retreat now seemed barren as the Museum of Barnum himself. With difficulty he stayed there even half an hour.

But as he turned to leave the room, a short, well-made, well-dressed man entered, whose cheerful face, and bright, brown eyes instantly caught his attention.

The two looked at each other, and then the new-comer exclaimed—

“Why, who would have thought of seeing you here, Fitzgerald?—How are you, old fellow—how are you?”

“Thank you, Stokes, I’m quite well, and glad to see you look so flourishing. I’m up in town for a week or two, and just dropped in here to see how the old place looked. What are *you* doing here?”

“Well,” says Stokes, “it is not often that a London man has idle time for Lincoln’s Inn\* Fields, but I have a pretty little case

\* The Museum of the College of Surgeons is in Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

of knee-joint in hand just now at the hospital, and it struck me that there was a model here of a case something like it. You are not going this moment, I suppose? Just wait five minutes, and I will walk with you."

Stokes had been Fitzgerald's class companion, in the old hospital days, and after some years of steady, plodding work, had been made Assistant House Surgeon at the Hospital. He was a bright, sturdy, good-natured, but not brilliant fellow, and one of the few whom the 'young man from the country' had, after an interval of stormy intercourse, at last begun to tolerate.

"Don't hurry, Stokes," he said, "I will wait. I shall be glad to have a chat with you. We'll look at the knee-joint together, if you like."

And so away they went to the model. It was, as he had told his friend, a very pretty, nice little case of knee-joint, appertaining to a little boy, aged twelve, in which the foot and lower part of the leg had slowly withered away and been gradually drawn up to the under surface of the thigh. But even the beauties of a diseased joint will not last for ever, especially when the spectators are hungry; and, after ten minutes' inspection, the two friends walked away together into Fleet Street.

"Come and dine with me at the 'Cock,'" said Fitzgerald, "if you can spare the time;" and, as it was Stokes's free day, he readily agreed to this plan, and the next hour was consumed over a rump-steak, and a glass of good sherry.

Stokes was chatty and communicative, and his lively talk, though far from profound, amused Fitzgerald.

"By Jove! Fitzgerald," he said, as they drank the first glass of a second pint of sherry, "I saw such a lovely girl in the omnibus, this morning?"

"Did you?" says his disconsolate friend, "it seems to me as if all the pretty faces had disappeared in London; I haven't seen one since I came up. Who was this lovely charmer?"

"O, by Jove, I don't know. Unfortunately, too, I did not notice whether it was a green or yellow omnibus. I don't suppose I shall ever see her again, but I wouldn't have missed her for fifty pounds. '*A thing of beauty is a joy for ever*,' you know."

"So I have heard, Stokes, but I must say that I can't see it, exactly. Here is this lovely girl of yours that you caught sight of for a minute—no sooner seen than vanished, merely to disappoint you. Much better if you had never seen her; and if you were to meet with her again, she would turn out a flirt or a jilt—or throw you over in some way or other. Never trust a woman, Stokes, it's dangerous work."

"Why, good heavens," replied Stokes, "as the poet says again—

'A change came o'er the spirit of his dream ;'

and a tremendous change seems to have come over you, my dear fellow, since our old days at Trinity Square. Why, I heard that you had settled down into a solid, good partnership, in the country, and become a regular family man ; and here you are abusing 'lovely woman,' as if you had only just escaped with bare life out of her hands. What is up, Fitzgerald ?"

"*Me* become a family man ?" replies his friend, "you never made a worse guess in your life ; I'm just as likely to be made archbishop as a Benedict. No, no, Stokes, I have been fagging rather hard for the last year or two, at a host of country patients, and the fact is, I want a change. Country life, you know, is a dull business."

"By Jove ! Fitzgerald, I've heard you praise it scores of times."

"Yes, yes, no doubt. But after a few years of it, and nothing else, one gets rusty, and a breath of stirring life does one good."

"By Jove ! it does, but if you want to see a bit of real, stirring life, go to 'The Oxbury' to-night. You'll see life enough there—ah ! it is stunning, I can tell you. I always go there when I get seedy, and want a *Perfect Teazer* ! Did you ever see him ?"

"See *him* ? see whom ? And what on earth is 'The Oxbury' ? You see to what a degree of ignorance I have sunk."

"But you don't mean to say," replied Stokes, in his slowest manner, "that you don't know Ramper ?"

'Not to know him argues yourself unknown.'

"That's precisely my very case."

"Ramper, my rustic friend, is the finest dancer and singer in London. There has been nothing like him since—why, Braham was nothing to him, for, though he was rather a swell in

'Loud roared the dreadful thunder,'

he couldn't dance a peg. You go to 'The Oxbury' to-night—that's the music-hall where he appears—a magnificent place, such a gallery of pictures, too ; and, by Jove, if you want to see pretty faces, that's the place. The first swells in London go there every night. First class music, and a superb ballet !"

Then he went on to describe to his friend more minutely the glories of "The Oxbury," and to all these Fitzgerald listened with great patience and a quiet smile at his companion's eloquence.



The talk ended by his asking the exact site of "The Oxbury," and promising to go there, without fail, before the week was out.

With this promise the friends parted; merry little Stokes went back to his pretty knee-joint case, and Fitzgerald to Trinity Square, where, after the noisy rattle of his friend, he found Mrs. Borlase his landlady's affectionate attentions more oppressive than ever. After he had drunk a solitary cup of coffee, therefore, he went out again for a stroll, in utter desperation, and, as luck would have it, he wandered on in the direction of "The Oxbury," near which, however, he lost his way, and was obliged to consult a policeman.

"Trinity Square, Boro'?" said K 51; "it's a mile and a half from here. Keep straight down this road, then first turning to the right, second on the left, right past 'The Oxbury,' then to your right again, and then you can't miss it."

Having thanked the policeman, Fitzgerald retraced his steps, and before long found himself in front of "The Oxbury," which at the first glance presented all the appearance of an ordinary, flaring gin-palace, except that close to the bottle and jug department, was a small, narrow doorway, leading directly down a long, dark passage to the seat of the Muses. He determined to pay his promised visit at once, and entered therefore by a narrow doorway, paid his shilling, received a cheque in lieu of it, and having yielded that up to a second janitor, presently found himself in a large, lofty room, round three sides of which ran a low gallery, and above that a tier of small private boxes. The body of the hall was filled with long, narrow tables, at which some hundreds of men and women, a few children, and many young girls, were seated, and all busily engaged in eating, drinking, or smoking; talking very loudly to their friends or neighbours; hammering vehement applause on the mahogany in front of them, or kicking it under their feet. The people in this part of the house chiefly belonged to the class of mechanics, little tradesmen, city clerks, shopmen, and boys, fast youths of eighteen who wore tawdry sham jewellery, and looked raffishly vulgar, even to their shirt-collars; with a host of mongrels who had about them some of the commoner features of the cabman, the billiard-marker, the betting-man, and the family of "Micawber." In the gallery and boxes (to which the cost of admission was higher,) there were more women than men, there was a greater display of jewellery, less tobacco-smoke, and even a more offensive air of vulgar pretension. At the further end of the hall, opposite to the entrance, was the stage, just like that of one of the smaller theatres; the space in front of which, usually devoted to the orchestra, was given up to round-tables and arm-chairs covered with tawdry red velvet. These were the stalls, and

admission to this inner circle of refinement cost half-a-crown. The whole place had a grimy, unwashed look about it, and was reeking with the fumes of common tobacco, gas, foul air, beer and spirits.

But what struck Fitzgerald most offensively was the fact that, look where he would among the women, he could scarcely see anything but brazen faces, flashy dresses, and that entire absence of all feminine restraint which too plainly showed to what unhappy class they belonged.

Finding both the heat and crowding intolerable where he stood, and that there was no chance of getting a seat in that part of the hall, he made up his mind to go round to the stalls. There he at last found a vacant chair, and sat down in the midst of a whirlwind of applause at the conclusion of a comic duet between a stout gentleman clothed from head to foot in pale green, and a masculine woman with red hair, dressed as a chamber-maid. To the applause succeeded a roar, throughout the hall, of "now, then, gents, give yer horders—horders, gents, horders," from an army of cadaverous waiters, looking like decayed undertakers' men, who had started up into life when the sounds of melody began to fade away. Two of these functionaries beset him until they had extracted a "horder," and Fitzgerald was in five minutes served with "an 'am sandwich and a glass o' bitter," for which he had the privilege of paying two shillings. The beer was lukewarm and flat, the sandwich dry and stringy; but as Fitzgerald was in want of neither, and had determined to see what the entertainment was like, he added choiceness of fare to all "The Oxbury's" other charms.

There is no need here to chronicle the whole of the dreary evening's entertainment. It must suffice to say that Fitzgerald stayed for two hours in that classical and refined pandemonium, during which time he swallowed more foul air, gas, and tobacco-smoke, than he had ever dreamed of as possibly mingled in one given space. The talk going on all round him was of the poorest, vulgar kind, and the intervals of music which now and then partly interrupted it, still poorer, more vulgar, and trashy. The words sung were chiefly made up of slang, the main difference between which and the conversation of the audience was its greater coarseness and indecency. Now and then, during the evening, as the printed bills boasted, short snatches of operatic chorus and classical music were performed in a loud, brassy, showily effective manner, which the listeners called "stunning;" but these excited little attention, and scarcely ruffled the stream of noisy talk. What alone commanded anything like silence, and roused the noisy rapture of the audience, were songs and duets sung by men and women, in which music of the lightest, stram, stram, order was

joined to words whose idiotic silliness was only exceeded by their occasional indecency. Of these songs it is impossible to give any correct notion, but by printing one of them entire in its pure nastiness. All that can be done is to cite the chorus of one, which seemed to excite unbounded applause from all, even the most drunken parts of the hall, and ran thus :—

“ I’m a camel, I’m a camel,  
And I wag my little tail,  
Says Charley Smith, what will you ‘ lush ?’  
Says I, a pint of hale !!!  
And O my heye, why do you cry,  
And turn so ‘ orrid pale ?”

The poor buffoon who chanted this miserable doggrel was, as the bills announced, the “ Incomparable Boggles,” the “ first Buffo Tenore ” \* in the metropolis, who, dressed in a dress-coat with unusually long tails, a sky-blue neckcloth, nankeen trousers, and carrying a bright green umbrella under his arm, was, in some high and mysterious sense, supposed to symbolize a young English nobleman, and *therefore* sang this song of—

“ I’m a camel, I’m a camel,”

as specially appropriate to the English nobility. He sang this quintessence of wit in a shrill, jerky voice, walking up and down the stage as he warbled, and, every time he came to the word “ camel,” giving a sudden little hump to his back, at which exquisite climax the whole house was seized with sudden convulsions of overpowering laughter. There were twelve verses to this charming ballad, and the concluding stanzas, being slightly indecent, were received with rapturous applause, and vociferously encored. Then Boggles, after vanishing for a moment, reappeared with his hair combed down over his eyes, his face slightly smutted, his cravat tied behind his ears, and his hands enveloped in a huge pair of red worsted gloves, to sing his other famous song of—

“ Jobbs, the pie-man.”

As this song was rather more idiotic, and even more indecent than the former one, its reception was even more unboundedly triumphant, and Fitzgerald, who was now utterly sick and weary of the whole affair, determined to go. As he passed the end of the hall, he glanced into a well-lighted room at the side, which he at once perceived to be the picture-gallery. He strolled down the room, and as it was empty, had no difficulty in seeing what the pictures were like. They were coarse, vulgar copies of well known

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\* A literal quotation.



second-rate pictures, chiefly devoted to half-naked women, and, as such, well fitted, to use poor Stokes' words, "to refine the tastes of the working classes, and teach them the beauties of true art."

How highly the working classes appreciated this golden opportunity of improvement was plain from the one fact that the picture-gallery had been empty during the entire evening.

When Fitzgerald got into the open air, he felt at first as if passing from the breath of a furnace into the region of the North Pole, but a breath or two without gas or tobacco-smoke soon revived him, and as a thick rain was falling, he buttoned up his coat and prepared for a sharp walk. At this moment, however, just under the full glare of "The Oxbury" gas-lamp, a tall, half-drunken fellow, with a short pipe in his mouth, staggered up to Fitzgerald and, with an impudent swagger, bawled loudly into his face the refrain of the charming song which he had heard an hour before,

"I'm a camel, I'm a camel,  
And I wag my little tail."

"You're a camel, are you?" said Fitzgerald, pushing the fellow from him; "it strikes me that you're much more like a donkey. But get out of my way, man, at all events, and let me pass."

"No more like a hass than yourself," replied the camel; "and I shan't get out of the way, not for you or any other swell." Whereupon he repeated his dancing manœuvre, and again bawled into Fitzgerald's face,

"I'm a camel, I'm a camel."

But this was far more than the doctor could stand, and in another moment a sudden blow sent his antagonist flat on his back on the muddy pavement, in the midst of half-a-dozen gaping bystanders, who seemed to have started up out of the pavement, so suddenly did they appear. Then, in an equally magic way, the half-a-dozen became a score, and the score a straggling crowd, and among them, for a wonder, a policeman.

"Here's a lark!" cried a ragged urchin to a drunken workman who reeled out of "The Oxbury"; "here's a swell bin and a murdered Lanky Jem the carpenter, and struck the fust blow, too; I see it, I did."

Then three or four roughs, Jem's particular friends and allies, gathered about the prostrate man and, raising him from the ground, declared, some that "he was dyin'" others that "he was dead," while all raved loudly enough in threats of personal vengeance "on the — swell that had done it."

In another moment Fitzgerald's hat was knocked off, and he

found himself in the midst of a crowd of low, ruffianly, men, who hustled about him with loud and angry cries, and the plain intention of robbing him. But he was strong and resolute, and knew how to use his hands, so that he managed to clear his way through them, and reached a sort of oasis in the middle of the road, where a couple of cabs had taken up their station in a grimy strip of muddy straw.

Here one of the Jehus who had witnessed the whole fray, and seen how Fitzgerald bore himself, suddenly befriended him. "I say, captain, if you don't want to be pretty well done for, you'd better hook it, and quick too."

With these friendly words, he caught up a hat from the ground, and handed it to the doctor.

"There," he said, "there's your tile, run for it; that's what you do, right off."

"Whereupon Fitzgerald, thankfully accepting the hat, dived under the horse's head, and made his escape into the space beyond, ran hurriedly across the road, and then down the first turning from the main street. Here he hurried on as smartly as he could along a crowded pavement, till he again began to attract observation, though he hardly knew why.

Then, all at once, he found out that his hat, instead of being on his head, was in his hand, that his clothes were splashed with mud, and that altogether he presented a strange and wild appearance. He stopped running, therefore, and tried to put on his hat. To his consternation he found that it was too small for him, was, in fact, not his own, and would not, indeed, go near his head, so that he had still to carry it in his hand, to the astonishment of all the passers-by. The street, too, became more and more crowded, as his way led him through what seemed to be a common market for the poorer class, among rows of stalls for fish and vegetables, about which still hung crowds of purchasers. Then he came to a large ready-made clothes shop, at the door of which, Mr. Isaac Sloman, the proprietor, with many kind words, invited him to enter, and glibly offered to fit him with an entire new "shute" in less than five minutes. Glad of any escape into quiet and safety, Fitzgerald turned into the shop at once.

"I do not want any clothes," he said to Isaac, "but my hat, you see, has had a tumble into the mud, and I must have something to cover my head on such a night as this. Let me have a Scotch cap."

"My caps and atts," replies insinuating Sloman, "is the besht and cheapest in all London. What figure now, will you go to for a Scotch cap, besht Paris make, fashionable cut?"

Fitzgerald had laid his hat on the counter, and was trying on a

cap, when the errand-boy rushed into the shop in a state of great excitement, and full of the news that there "had bin a shindy just outside the door of 'The Oxbury,' a swell chap had bin and half-killed 'lanky Jem,' and that he, the errand boy, had seen the dead man carried away jest like lead by two bobbies, and that the cove that done it had cut and run and left his att on the pavemint."

With one eye on his customer, and one on the new comer, Mr. Sloman quietly listened to these stirring words, and as he listened said to his shopman—

"Why it fits the gent like a glove, don't it, Samuel? and there's a glass there, sir, as you can see yourself in to a 'air."

The customer turned, accordingly, to look at himself in the glass, and as he did so Sloman quietly took up the muddy hat, and dropped it into a box under the counter.

"Keep it dark, Sam," he whispered, "keep it dark, the polis may want that there att some day."

Then Fitzgerald paid for his cap, put it on, and glad to be rid of the dirty hat, which he pretended to have forgotten, walked out into the crowded street once more, and soon made his way home to Trinity Square.

Worn out by the varied adventures of the day, and more than disgusted with the last chapter of them, he was glad enough after a quiet pipe to betake himself to bed.

But the next morning, at breakfast, he was amazed and annoyed enough to see in the *Times* a paragraph headed "*Drunken Fracas at the Oxbury*," followed by a long and inaccurate account of the whole affair, and which ended thus—"Two fellows appear to have been engaged in the row, one of whom, a prize-fighter, it is said, knocked the other down on the pavement, with so much violence as to fracture his skull severely. The wounded man was carried off to St. Thomas's Hospital, but his antagonist got cleverly away by dodging through a cab-stand, and though without a hat, managed to escape from the police, who were close at his heels. His face, however, is pretty well known, and, as he is singularly ugly and six feet high, he will be in custody before long."

When he first read this paragraph, he was half inclined to be amused; but second thoughts made him regard matters in a graver light, and he saw that consequences might follow which would seriously inconvenience him.

"By Jove," he said to himself at last, "if that fellow has been taken to St. Thomas's, I must go round and see old Stokes."

In ten minutes he was sitting opposite to his friend.

"Why, Fitzgerald, what on earth induced you to mount a Scotch cap. Is it *the* dress for a country family doctor? I hardly knew you."



"No, no, Stokes, it's only when I'm an idle man—not in business hours. But how is the knee joint?"

"O, bother the knee joint," replied the house surgeon, "just when it's getting to be a really good case, some old aunt or other comes up from the country—the boy is an orphan, you know—and insists that she will take him away next week. 'Good heavens!' as I said to her, 'good heavens, Mrs. Burridge, we may not have such a case again for years. It will be a sin and a shame to take him away.'"

"So it would," replied Fitzgerald; "the woman is clearly mad."

"Not a doubt of it, Fitz, and I told her so too—quite mad, '*non com.*'"

"Anything else, fresh, in lately, Stokes?"

"No—I think not. Nothing but a great lanky giant of a chap brought in last night, with his head smashed in—they said—in a fight. All I know is, I never saw such a blow from a fist. We have done all we can for him, but he lies like a log, as heavy as lead. Like to see him?"

"Yes," replied Fitzgerald, "I think I should."

Upstairs, accordingly, they went; but, after a short inspection of "the camel who wagged his little tail," both clearly came to one conclusion, that lanky Jem's case was a serious one, and that his friends, if he had any, must be looked up.

"I am going down into the Borough," said Stokes as they left the sick ward, "stop one minute for me, and I'll walk with you."

Once in the street, the two friends chatted away freely, though Fitzgerald had till now been rather silent.

"Whereabouts did the row take place, Stokes, in which this fellow got his head smashed?"

"I don't know. The police, I think, said somewhere in Varco Street—but I'm not sure. The fellow has only spoken once—so the nurse told me—and then it was something about being a camel! His brain is all wrong, that's clear."

"Any-how," replied his friend, "he *was* a camel last night. So, at least, he told me himself, just outside the door of 'The Oxbury.'"

"What on earth do you mean, Fitzgerald?"

"Just what I say, Stokes. The drunken brute came reeling up to me, and shouting into my face some vulgar drivel about

'I'm a camel, I'm a camel!'

whereupon, as he would not be quiet, I was obliged to knock him down in self-defence."

And then Fitzgerald told his friend the whole story of the evening's entertainment, and the paragraph in the *Times*.

"By Jove, Fitz, I *am* sorry that you have got into this mess, and all in consequence of going to that confounded hole of a place, 'The Oxbury.'"

"That's the very name for it, Stokes. Pictures, music, and company just on a par. Brazen women, half-drunken city clerks, and seedy swells, a stench of gas and stale tobacco, idiotic songs, and trashy choruses—*voilà tout*!"

"Ah, my friend, you were bilious and off your feed altogether, I see—that's it. And then this great hulking brute came dancing up, and worried you into giving him a quietus, and so completely upset the whole machine. Go there some night quietly with me, and I'll engage you shall hear some tip-top singing. Meanwhile, I'll look after the giant, and let you know how he goes on."

Then the two friends shook hands and parted.

The next morning at breakfast, the postman brought Fitzgerald a letter, which made him look very grave as he read it. Thus it ran—

"St. Thomas' Hospital, 10 P.M.

"MY DEAR FITZGERALD,—I am sorry to say that the giant looks worse than ever. Norman and I have been with him for the last hour; and if a change does not soon take place for the better, we fear that it will end in *Queer Street* with him, poor fellow. I let you know this in time, because the police have been here twice to-day, and are on the look-out for 'the prize fighter,' who, they say, may '*be wanted*.'

"You therefore must make yourself scarce, that is clear. Either go home at once to Devonshire, or, if you still wish to be out, run down to 'The Ship Hotel,' Gravesend, by the next train, and I will join you there at six p.m., for a quiet chop. By the way, *it's the very thing for you*, if it gets too hot for you here. There's an emigrant ship now lying off Gravesend—so Norman told me—hard up for a medical officer, their own having just fallen down the hold and broken a leg or two. The captain writes to Thomas's, to ask if we can send him a decent young fellow for the trip. How would you like New Zealand—for a change?

"Ever yours,

"H. S."

"P.S.—Send a line by return of post. The camel has begun chanting again!"

Fitzgerald read this note twice, carefully; then he smoked a quiet and solemn pipe of meditation, and having read it a third time, tossed it into the fire, and rang the bell.

"Mrs. Borlase," he said, when that lady appeared, "will you be good enough to send for a cab? I am going out of town for a few days, and shall not dine at home to-day."

"Oh, Mr. Fitzgerald, that's a dreadful pity; there's that lovely 'squab pie'\* as I've just a-finished making it this very minute, and—"

"Never mind the pie, Mrs. Borlase; you and Sarah can manage to dine off it, I daresay. I must go now, so let her run for the cab."

His carpet-bag was packed in a trice. Then he sat down and wrote two lines to his friendly adviser.

"MY DEAR STOKES,

"By all means 'The Ship,' at 6 p.m.

"Ever yours,

"RUSTICUS."

Then he jumped into the cab, and drove to London Bridge, after having told his landlady that any letters might be taken at once to Mr. Stokes, at St. Thomas's.

Gravesend is not a lively place at any time, and Fitzgerald found it as dull and dirty as many have found it before him. But he got some lunch at "The Ship," engaged a bed-room, ordered his dinner for 6 p.m., and managed to while away the day in sauntering about the town until the arrival of his friend.

Dinner over, and the waiter having at last evaporated, they began a quiet chat—which had been as yet impracticable, but of which we have only space for the final few minutes, as the two friends smoked a cozy pipe.

"Well, Fitzgerald, now you know the whole length and breadth of the matter. There's New Zealand, if you like it, that's clear. I saw the captain at the station, just as I got out of the train, and he will be only too glad to have you. It must be either that, or taking the chance of lying *perdu* here for a month or two, and letting your beard and moustache grow; that is, if the poor camel turns up his toes, as I really am afraid he will."

"I am strongly inclined for New Zealand. The only thing that puzzles me is the outfit."

"Oh, as to that, there is no difficulty. Jackson—the man with the broken legs—will be only too thankful to get rid of his, as far as it will serve. There are ready-made shops here, and the ship doesn't go till to-morrow. The real difficulty seems to me,

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\* A Devonshire dish,—of apples, mutton, and onion.



how are you to get away from your partner, the old doctor, down west?"

"Well, Stokes, there is some little difficulty there, I admit. It will be very short warning for him, no doubt; but I had a good talk with him before I left, and if the worst comes to the worst, I must be content to lose some hundreds of pounds. If it were not for this confounded camel, there would be no such tremendous hurry. But I can't stay here, hanging about this miserable, dingy, place, playing at hide and seek with the police; and so, I think it must be New Zealand. When does the ship start?"

"To-morrow, the captain says. But he can't go to sea without a medical officer on board; so that you have only to go down with me now to the agent's office, and accept the post, and then you may easily squeeze a day or two out of him, just as you find it necessary."

When Fitzgerald wished his friend good-bye at 10 p.m. on the up-platform of the railway that night, he had accepted the post of medical officer on board the good ship *Armida*, and—without much difficulty—obtained a reprieve of three or four days before she sailed, as might be required.

"Good night, Fitzgerald; you shall have a *bulletin* to-morrow as to your friend's state, and I will run down and see you again before you start. Your box at old mother Borlase's shall be sent off to-morrow without fail,—if the old lady will part with it. She knows me."

"Here is my card, Stokes, with a message on it, all ready. She knows my writing, and that will prevent all trouble."

Then Fitzgerald walked slowly back to the coffee-room of "The Ship," and there sat down in rather a gloomy mood to think over the events of the day, and speculate rather bitterly as to the future. His musings over, he called for pen and ink, and wrote a farewell letter to his old friend Vining, at Langford.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### YES OR NO?

"Speak but the word, and he shall live;  
And be a man once more."—ROBINSON.

On the morning of the second day after Stokes' visit to Gravesend, Dr. Vining sat unhappily at breakfast;—unhappily, because Mr. Norrington Macgregor sat opposite to him, making a mighty breakfast on a ham, which he cut the wrong way, and looking as coolly self-possessed as if in his own house. The old doctor was

convinced that the man must be sent away, but for the life of him he knew not how to set about the task of getting rid of him. Out of all his long list of patients, there was not one but seemed to grumble when the name of Macgregor was mentioned; while many openly spoke of sending for some other medical man, rather than endure his visits.

At last he began in sheer desperation:

"Mr. Norrington, I am glad to be able to tell you—"

But at this moment the door opened, and a servant entered with the morning's letters, two for Dr. Vining, one for Mr. Macgregor. The doctor's first letter was merely a note from a patient, and was soon thrown aside, but the second bore the mark of *Gravesend*, and by the look of the reader's face, seemed to contain tidings of any but a pleasant kind. One final paragraph in it, indeed, he read several times, as he walked up and down the room, and then sat down in his arm-chair to think over it. As he reads, we must look over his shoulder:

"There, my dear old friend, now you have before you the whole of this wretched business, out of which, if the man at Guy's should die, as seems most likely, there is no way of escape but in the good ship *Armida*. All the money part of the question I leave in your hands to be settled as you think just. All I beg is that you should be the clear gainer in the matter. Put yourself, not your ungrateful nephew, in the first place, and I shall be more than content. I have money enough with me for all present purposes, and all that comes to me may rest in the banker's hands as before, until I want it. Langford I shall not see again, I expect, for many a long day. It has been a hard battle to come to that decision, but it is the only one possible to me unless that 'one word' be spoken, which, by the way, is now too late to speak, as the ship sails to-morrow or the next day at the latest. God bless you, old friend, if we never meet again. Don't think too hardly of me.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. FITZGERALD."

"You don't look best pleased with your budget, doctor," says the Macgregor, in his harsh, squeaky voice. "They're nasty things, bills."

"Neither bills, nor anything that you can understand, Mr. Macgregor," hastily replied the doctor; "but if you have quite done breakfast, may I trouble you to ring that bell twice for Gully, my man." In two minutes, enter Gully.

"John," said his master, "how is the mare?"

"All right, sir."

"Good! Then put her into the phaeton with the old chestnut, and be ready in ten minutes, or five, if possible, to drive me to Encomb as hard as you can go."

"Yes, sir; in ten minutes I'll be at the door, sir."

"Mr. Macgregor," said the doctor, "I have just had important letters from town, and must go to Encomb at once on business. I must ask you to do the best you can with all my list of patients to-day. Next week, I hope, you will be able to return to your patients at Sandymouth, who will be sadly in want of you, from all I hear. Good morning."

Then the doctor went into his own room, and the Macgregor, in high dudgeon at this rather cool speech, sat down once more near a goodly Exeter ham, in which he made a deep gash, saying, as he helped himself, "It's like his d—d impudence. However, I'm not gone yet, and not going without proper notice from Fitzgerald himself."

In less than an hour from that time Dr. Vining's panting horses pulled up at the gate of the Manor Farm.

The doctor himself rang loudly at the hall door, which was opened for him in a moment by Mary herself, who had seen him from the breakfast-room window, and now ran to meet her father in great haste.

"Why, papa, what in the world brings you here as pale as a ghost at this time of day? What is the matter?"

"Well, dear,"—kissing her as he spoke—"a pair of horses brought me; and there is a great deal the matter, as you shall hear presently."

Once in his favourite seat, the doctor opened fire.

"My dear Mary, there is a great deal the matter. Look at me. I have had little or no sleep for nights upon nights; I can't relish my dinner; I get ill-tempered with my patients; and that infernal Scotchman—I beg your pardon—drives me mad with his ignorance and impudence. I am altogether wrong; and then to crown all comes a letter from Fitzgerald, saying that he sails for New Zealand to-morrow."

"For New Zealand! Nonsense, papa."

"No nonsense at all, Mary, but downright sober truth."

Then he took out the Gravesend letter, and read from it the strongest and most decided passages that referred to Fitzgerald's resolve never to come back to Langford.

"There," he said, "now you see the whole affair, Mary, and needn't wonder why I looked so worried and pale. I have never been the same man I was since he went away, and never shall be till he comes back. *Comes back*, did I say? By this time he is all but off. However, after all it isn't much matter about an old



croaker like me, whether I last much longer or not. I only wish to heaven that Gravesend was forty miles off instead of three hundred, I would be there before morning, and lay hands on the rascal, and bring him back *volens volens*."

To all which long outburst, strange to say, his daughter made no reply whatever. As he went on speaking, she moved slowly away towards the window, and now stood gazing out upon the lawn as if in silent abstraction.

"Well, child," he cried angrily, "what is there to look at in that garden?"

"O, papa, there is the most extraordinary daddy-long-legs here on this window pane that I ever saw in my life."

"Hang the daddy-long-legs! I only wish my legs were long enough to step from here to Gravesend at one stride."

"That can't be; but there's the telegraph, papa."

"God bless my soul, so there is! But what's the good of the telegraph, Mary, when I have no message to send that will stop him? I have written my very best and utmost, and you see what he says in reply."

Silence once more.

"Is there nothing that would bring him back?" says a soft, clear, voice.

"Nothing that *I* can say."

"Nothing that *you* can say! What do you mean, papa? If you can't say it, who can?"

"There is but one person who can say it, my dear; and it is only one word that has to be said. But that person is so determined to have her own way, and altogether such a Tartar of a woman when she has once made up her mind, that it's useless to ask her."

"May I enquire who this ferocious woman is, papa? and what the word is that she won't say?" (Here she looked out of the window once more.)

"Yes, my dear; the word is 'Come;' and the ferocious young woman is one that you and I know very well. But it's of no use to ask her."

"Have you tried, sir?"

"No,—but I will, Mary, this very moment."

But she gave him not a chance.

"How far is it to Exeter, you cruel old man?"

"Seven-and-twenty miles."

"Why, you could post it in three hours."

"God bless you, Mary, for saying that. Come here and be kissed *instantly*, before I go."

Then he rang the bell, furiously, for Gully to bring his carriage round.

"It's at the gate, sir."

Then he kissed Mary once more. "God bless you, again, my child," he cried, "you have added years to my life, and if it isn't too late, have sent 'Sunshine' into a heart that has been dark enough for many a day."

"Gully," he said, as he jumped into his carriage, "drive like the very fury to Totness, then get four horses at 'The Crown,' and then on like the wind to Exeter. Two guineas to you and to the post-boys if you do it under the three hours! It's a case of life or death."

It struck twelve as they started, and three P.M. as the message left the telegraph office, in High Street, Exeter.

## CHAPTER L.

### A NEW MAN.

"Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep  
Upon the very naked name of Love."—SHAKESPEARE.

THAT very night, all Fitzgerald's arrangements were complete, and with a weary heart, now that the first novelty of the idea had worn off, he began to think over his miserable fate in having to leave England. It was ten o'clock by the time his day's work was over, and after dinner he had strolled down towards the pier-head, in the moonlight, to smoke a quiet cigar.

"Well," he thought, "it's a miserable business, look at it as I will, and all owing to that beastly hole, 'The Oxbury.' Here is this poor wretch dying in the hospital, and I, with a ticket of leave for New Zealand; and not a soul but poor old Stokes and the doctor, to care whether I go or stay."

He went over the ground many times; but this was the essence of all his musings.

On his return to "The Ship," the waiter put into his hand a letter, in an envelope of dingy red, with the word TELEGRAM printed in one corner.

"That come for you, sir, while you was out."

He tore it open in silent wonder; but no words can express his unutterable amazement when he read, as follows:—

"*R. Vining to W. Fitzgerald, Ship Hotel, Gravesend.*

"She says—Come."

At first he could hardly believe his own eyes. But there could be no mistake. SHE SAYS, COME. He read it over and over again, fifty times, and every time with growing rapture. By three words he had been turned from death into life. He was a new man, ready to sing, or dance, or go mad for very joy.

All at once he thought of the camel at St. Thomas'; and then his heart turned to lead. Then a new thought came.

"Waiter!" he cried, "my bill in two minutes. I must go to London by the next train."

"Last train's gone, sir,—at 10.15."

"Then I must have an express."

"Express, sir? Yes, sir. Fifty pounds, sir!"

"Chaise and pair, then. No—chaise and four."

"Yes, sir. Chaise and four, sir. How soon? Before supper?"

"Now—this very instant. Half-a-guinea to you if it's ready in ten minutes. Luggage packed, and bill paid. There's a five-pound note."

It was nearly two in the morning, when the High Street of Southwark was as dark, empty, and silent as it ever is, that a dusty, yellow post-chaise rattled sharply over the stones, and pulled up at the gate of St. Thomas' Hospital.

The post-boys were soon paid, and paid well; and then the traveller made his way into the hospital, and after a colloquy with the night-porter, to Mr. Stokes' room.

"He is there, sir," said the man, "now, for there's been a row in Kent Street—two bad cases—and we was obliged to call him up."

"Good God! Fitzgerald, what's the matter?"

"Matter, my boy. Nothing—nothing, but what is good, and jolly, and right as a trivet. Read that telegram!"

"Well, I *have* read it. *She says, come!* What on earth does it mean?"

"It means, Stokes, that New Zealand may go to Jericho, and the 'Armida' with it, for what I care. No, no, my boy—I'm not mad. Listen."

Then he told all his story. His friend shook hands with him, mightily; and if they had been Frenchmen, the two would have embraced. But, being Englishmen, Stokes sent out for some supper and a pot of bitter beer, after which they smoked a solemn and loving pipe.

All at once, however, Fitzgerald started up, and exclaimed, hastily—

"But what is to be done about the unhappy Camel? Is he dead?"

"Dead, my boy? Not a bit of it. It's all owing to Norman's care. He was sitting up in bed an hour or two ago, asking for a drink of water, as rational as you are—a great deal more rational. If you hadn't come upon me in this awful way, I should have been with you in the morning to say good-bye, and give you the Camel's love."



"But, joking apart, Fitz, what is to be done about the 'Armida?' You are bound to go."

"Then, I am bound to what is impossible. You must get me a substitute. Fifty pounds will get one, and all my outfit into the bargain; if not, a hundred. I go now to the telegraph office, and by the early express I go to Exeter,—'Armida' or no 'Armida.' And, my dear friend, it is you who must help me in my distress; for you only can. I will give you an order on the London agent of the Exeter Bank for one hundred pounds, and that one hundred pounds are for your use in providing a medical officer. Spend it as you think best, or keep it; but not a penny goes back to the banker's."

A hundred pounds well spent in London can accomplish many things, and in this case it did all that was needed. The 'Armida' was delayed two days more; but she then sailed with her full complement.

That night Fitzgerald slept at Exeter; he breakfasted with the old doctor at Langford the next morning; and with a light heart fully explained to Macgregor that his valuable services would not be required after that day. But the explanation was accompanied by a handsome cheque, and the Macgregor went back to his own people serenely content.

Then with a radiant happiness in his heart and in his face, Fitzgerald rode once more through the green lanes to Encomb. The May was still in bloom, and the hedges were fragrant with violets; and the birds sang songs of joy to him as he went. "Take it all for granted," was the doctor's advice as they parted, and, for once, he determined to take the advice offered to him.

Mother and child were at play together in the avenue, as usual, when he reached the Manor Farm; and instead of going round by the stables, he went direct to the beeches. Charley was the first to see him, and came bounding up in great glee.

"Well, Charley, how is mamma?"

"There she is, cousin Willy, and looking so red. Isn't she?"

Fitzgerald turned towards the lady, and saw that a bright flush had touched both cheeks with a rosy tint, that her eyes sparkled brightly, and that she looked more charming than ever. Was it surprise only that thus startled the roses in her face? He was too wise to notice it, whatever the cause, and too generous to presume upon his advantage.

"Well, Willy," she exclaimed, "I *am* surprised. I thought you were at Gravesend, or on your way to New Zealand."

"So I was, Mary. But four horses took me to London, and the express to Exeter, a postchaise to Langford, and here I am. Have I come too soon, or too fast, Mary?"

"I did not think you could possibly be here before to-morrow, even if you got the telegram."

"Three words lent swift wings to my feet. Would you like to see it? Here it is. Only promise to give it back to me." So saying, he took from his pocket the envelope of dingy red, and handed it to her.

She opened and read it, and blushed more charmingly than ever. Charley was luckily out of sight as she gave it back to him.

"I have obeyed the summons, Mary, as I should if it had been a thousand miles instead of two hundred and fifty. What do you say to me, now I am here?"

"I say that he is a very wicked old man to be sending such messages in my name; and as for his partner, why,—I am glad to see him."

Then she shook hands with him, and the next moment felt that a strong arm was round her waist, and for the first time in her life her lips were pressed by those of a man who loved her with all his heart.

At this instant back came Charley in great haste with some wild violets.

"What were you kissing mamma for, Cousin Willy?"

"Very naughty, isn't he, Charley?" says mamma.

"Yes, mamma—unless you let him do it. Did she, Cousin Will?"

"Well done, Charley—she didn't prevent me at all events. You shall have a ride for that."

Then, leading his horse with one hand, and the boy on the saddle, looking bright and happy as a king, Fitzgerald strolled back to the house, with sunshine in his heart, and *Little Sunshine* herself walking by his side;—the dream of his life fulfilled, the passion of his heart gratified, at last. Although it seemed too great and too good a fortune to be true, he had only to look into the child's beaming face, or the mother's loving eyes, to see that it was no dream, but a reality.

As he lifted the boy off the horse's back at the stable gate, a soft voice whispered to him—

"Don't you think, sir, that you will be late for your patients at Langford, if you don't set out at once?"

But, strange to say, Fitzgerald was in no hurry. His patients could wait, must wait. And wait they did, for when he at last reached *The Vinery*, dinner had been kept back an hour, and the doctor was half inclined to be peppery.

"Scold away, doctor—I can bear anything to-night."

"I will, Fitz, when I've had a glass of wine. I have sent that Scotch fellow off to a bad case at the workhouse, so we shall dine

in peace for once. Did She give you those violets in your button-hole?"

"She did—and Charley picked them for his new papa."

"Hurrah!" said the old doctor, "we will drink a bumper to the man who invented the telegraph. But for him, you would now be calling for the steward on board the good ship 'Armida.'"

## CHAPTER LI.

### WHAT A PARSON CAN DO.

"As half in shade, and half in sun,  
This world along its path advances,  
May that sweet side he shines upon  
Be all that ever meets thy glances."

HOWELL.

AND now, kindly reader, the threads of our little story draw to a close, and there is small need to tell you what so sagacious a judge easily foresees to be coming. Just a page more, and my pleasant task is done.

When the first snowdrops began to show among the yellow crocuses of the next spring, there was a quiet wedding one morning at St. Padron's, at which the good vicar officiated with a glad heart.

As for the bridegroom, he was fairly beside himself for joy—more like a boy fresh from school, so said old Vining, than a steady, respectable, medical man. The bride was quiet enough, but it was the peace of a heart well content with its own quiet happiness, and the true love of a man whom she could respect as well as love. Heart and lips went together that day, and many a rough voice said "Amen," and wished her God-speed and Good luck, as the service ended, and she walked through a crowd of fishermen and their wives to their carriage.

Foremost among the crowd was an old man with white hair, who stood uncovered as she passed, and said—

"God bless 'e, my lady, with sunshine all your days, and many of 'em too, for all the comfort you've brought to me and mine."

"O mamma!" cried Charley, "there's Fanny. Look at her."

And then stepped forward a young woman, whose bright eyes, full of tears, sparkled for very joy as she offered to the bride a bunch of white and purple violets, edged with green fern; which Mary took with many thanks, and placed in her bosom.

Then far and wide through the sunny air the bells rang out over the smooth, blue sea, and the men and boys shouted, and children scattered flowers along the church-yard path. And all



there said it was the brightest, bonniest wedding ever seen at St. Padron's.

Clouds and sunshine in Willy Fitzgerald's path followed that happy day for many a long year. But he was too happy to grumble at the cloud, and too wise to wish only for the sun ;—for he had one with him now to lessen the shade, and to double the sunlight a hundred fold.

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## GEMS FROM CLASSIC MINES. No. I.

CHORUS FROM THE "KNIGHTS" OF ARISTOPHANES, l. 551.

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KING of the main, Poseidon, hear ;  
God of the earth-born steed, appear ;  
For well, I ween, thou lov'st the neigh  
And brass-rung hoof of courser gay :  
Lov'st thou to see each azure prow  
Glide swiftly o'er thy waves below :  
To thee, great king, in gladsome sport  
At Athens' race our sons resort ;  
For thee the toilsome contest bear,  
For thee the flower-wove chaplet wear ;  
God of the golden trident, now  
A very present help be thou :  
Joyful our chorus bids thee come  
And welcomes to thy spray-dashed home.  
Adored on Sunium's rocky height  
Thou seest the sportive dolphin play ;  
Gerestus' cliff proclaims thy might,  
Who on thy Phormio smild'st amid the battle fray :  
Arise ! if e'er, be present now :  
Arise ! and hear our suppliant vow.

## A COMPETITION-WALLAH EXTRAORDINARY.

### A CHINESE LEGEND.

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No existing nation has so thoroughly carried out to their utmost limits the views of those who advocate open competition as the great means of discriminating desert as the Chinese ; and the foreigner resident in that country who succeeds in making himself acquainted with details of their social and political organizations, such as are beyond the every-day experience of the "pidgin" English-speaking portion of the community, is often struck by the curious, if not ludicrous, aspect presented by the workings of a system which, however sensible in its origin, is now rather calculated to illustrate the saying that "one *may* have too much of a good thing," than to inspire the respect which its advocates in this country would have paid to it.

The institution of "competitive examinations" is, as most people are aware, the basis of literary, official, and military promotion throughout the Chinese empire. But it is also the basis of selection under other circumstances which, to say the least, seem oddly at variance with such a mode of test. Thus the wife of the Emperor is chosen from a numerous company of damsels who may not inaptly be said to compete for the questionable honour. And yet more strangely do we find that popular belief extends the workings of the competitive system to the spirit world. It has been said, and it would almost seem with some truth, that the idea of competition in its crudest stage is to be referred to a desire, peculiarly Asiatic, of seeing visible effect follow visible cause. That such is the case as regards physical effort is at least true, and if the argument apply to mental effort also, the Chinese eminently illustrate its correctness. But, be that as it may, they present the curious spectacle of a people, unenlightened by Christianity or Western civilization, politically dead for ages to foreign intercourse, and adopting a standard altogether different to our own of morality and social obligation, which has for centuries adopted a system but tardily receiving recognition at our own hands.

It is true that, owing to ever-increasing corruption, public competition for official employments in China has degenerated into a

practice almost useless and inoperative as regards its original object—that of selecting the best *men* for the vacant appointments, and not those who possess the greatest talent of stringing together with ready facility sentences destitute of originality, and demanding but a parrot-like exertion of memory on the part of candidates as regards matter, while manner has degenerated into artificial absurdities. As a specimen of “Wên tsang”—for thus the style of writing required from candidates is denominated—it will be sufficient to give the eight headings into which an essay is supposed to be divided. They are the “breaking open” of the subject, “receiving,” “beginning to discuss,” “concatenation,” “the passing vein,” “the middle division,” “the closing branch,” and the “winding up division.” Perhaps the best that can be said for such artificial essays is that the rule of such divisions is not always adhered to; but in the main there is more sound than sense in such productions. Whatever, however, the modern faults of such a system—for much of the nonsensical portion is of modern growth—it cannot be denied that the original regulations, dating back to our own pre-historic times, evinced wise statesmanship, and an admirable conception of the most efficient manner in which to secure intellect and talent for the public service, even if combined with an overdue desire to let it be seen that talent and labour were sure of visible and immediate reward.

In times anterior to the dynasty of Tâng much care was exercised in enquiring as to the character and capacities of would-be candidates. Many of the educated Chinese themselves now complain that whilst in the times of the Han, good and virtuous men were sought out for promotion, the chief qualification now-a-days is not character but a ready pen; and there is much truth in the complaint. In view of this it is more than strange to find the western nations of to-day adopting in all their main points regulations framed by Chinese statesmen in the dim past, before tradition even records our own origin, to ensure for certain departments of government the fittest and ablest candidates.

Our present object is not, however, to discuss in its various bearings a practice which is so essential a detail of Chinese polity, but to lay before the reader a short legend illustrative of the manner in which the idea of competition has become an all-pervading test of merit until, according to a wide-spread notion, it is extended to a state beyond the grave, and the disembodied spirit is supposed to compete with others similarly situated for posts which entitle it to the worship of the living, and high social position—if the term be admissible—amongst the dead.

The following legend, one of many which are gravely related and believed in by living Chinese, will afford an example of the



impression made on the popular mind by the idea to which we have alluded. Incidentally also it illustrates the regard in which filial piety is held by that people.

In the reign of Tao kwang, the last emperor but one of the present dynasty, there lived in a city of the Fuhkien province a literary graduate named Kung. Despite his qualifications, which were of a sufficiently creditable nature, and of a character which stood high as that of an honest man, against whom the tongue of slander could find nothing to say, his poverty and honesty combined stood in the way of his advancement. The sole support of his aged mother—his wife having long since died—he had neither the money nor the inclination to resort to bribery; and having unfortunately quarrelled with a powerful mandarin in the neighbourhood whose influence with the Literary Chancellor was reputed to be unbounded, he found obstacles thrown in his way, and had but small hopes of getting on in the world; for he had reached the age of forty-five years and his official employment was of a very humble nature. Still he was much respected in the neighbourhood, and rather at the solicitations of the parents themselves than as the result of efforts on his own part to obtain such employment, had been entrusted by several respectable neighbours with the education of their children. Good as he was he could not at times help reflecting with some bitterness on the adverse fate which pursued him.

At the time he is introduced to us he was feeling particularly low-spirited, having just heard that an old schoolfellow and friend, once reputed the dunce of his class, had stepped into an official berth of considerable emolument. To do him justice he was not envious of his friend but felt despairing of his own prospects; and the better to indulge his melancholy thoughts he dismissed his scholars at an early hour and retired to his Kang, or stove bed, such as is in use in all Chinese houses. The glare of a summer afternoon softened into twilight, and twilight deepened into darkness, as he lay upon his back sadly musing upon his troubles. Some time passed away when he suddenly became aware that the darkness was disappearing, and that daylight was returning with a rapidity that was both unusual and alarming. He was beginning to speculate as to the cause of this singular occurrence, (for he could not believe that he had slept through the night,) when a sharp tap came at the door; it was opened, and a man dressed in the costume of the messengers attached to official *yamuns* (public offices) stood before him. He bore in his hand a red card, such as Chinese of position interchange, and was leading by the bridle a white-headed horse.

With a deferential salutation the messenger enquired if his

"honourable name" were not Kung? and on being answered in the affirmative presented the card, which bore upon its face a name familiar to the graduate, and said that he was directed to request that Kung would accompany him to the place of examination. The examiners were ready and awaited him.

Astonished at a request which his experience and common sense told him was unusual and irregular, Kung inquired who had sent him.

The messenger gave no direct reply, but merely said that he was told to ask Kung to come at once.

"But," said Kung, "the Literary Chancellor has not yet arrived in the province, nor is it yet the time of examination. How then is it possible that I can present myself—Besides who is there to examine me?"

"That," answered the messenger, "I cannot say. I was told only to bid you come and be examined."

Now Kung had recognized the name upon the card as that of a district magistrate whom he had not seen for some time, but with whom he had in past times been on friendly terms. Concluding that after all no evil could be intended towards him, and forgetting all about his troubles, Kung put on his hat, mounted the white-headed horse, and followed the messenger, who sped quickly along in a southerly direction. In a few minutes they got beyond the limits of the little town, and entered the open country. Kung was utterly unable to estimate either the distance passed over or the time occupied in his ride, which seemed rapid enough, though his companion appeared, when looked at, to be merely walking at an ordinary pace. However that may be the country was entirely strange, and they travelled many a long league in silence, unbroken even by the chirrup of an occasional bird. No sun appeared to shine, though everything was bright as if at noon.

In course of time they arrived at the outskirts of a city which Kung, judging from description, could only suppose was the provincial capital. Still, in silence, the strange conductor led the way, and the two passed through the entrance gates of the massive walls, and finally turned into the door of a large building, which Kung had no difficulty in recognizing as one of the public *yamuns* or offices of the provincial government. The traditional dragon glared from the "portal wall" (a short, disconnected piece of wall which fronts the entrances of all public buildings in China), and Kung almost imagined that he saw it wink a welcome as he passed its conspicuously ugly picture.

As they entered the building Kung was struck by the beauty and good taste everywhere visible both in the arrangements and furniture. The gilt-work and delicate colouring which, so beauti-

ful when new, is, as a rule, so hideously shabby when it has seen the suns and rains of a few short years, was brilliant beyond conception. The figure of his guide, moreover, seemed to have assumed a more imposing appearance. His countenance was clearer and his clothes newer than when he stood at the door of Kung's humble abode. It was the same man and yet there was a difference. This first led Kung to suspect that he was in strange company. Drawing aside the bamboo screen, which hung down over the door of a large room, his guide motioned him to enter.

The apartment was of unusual size and beautifully furnished. At one end was the dais which reached from wall to wall covered with the softest felt, and overlaid with mats of incomparable fineness; while the elbow-tables, upon which stood cups of fragrant tea, were of costly southern ebony, richly carved, and inlaid with red marble. The whole furniture of the room was of the same rich character, and the walls were hung around with sentences from the classics traced in the most beautiful chirography upon silk, satin, and gold-sprinkled scrolls. Through an open door could be seen one of those circular apertures which Chinese ingenuity and taste constructs in such a manner as to serve for a frame in which to set the most effective and picturesque pieces of rockwork and other scenery, giving a glimpse to the awe-struck guest of more than earthly beauty. Seated at the upper, or dais, end of the hall were some ten or twelve officials of rank, none of whose faces were familiar to Kung save that of one Kuan-Chwang-mu, whose name it was he had seen upon the card in the hands of the mysterious messenger. Three chairs and tables stood at the lower end of the room, and upon each table were placed paper, ink-slabs, and brushes. A young man, evidently a literary graduate, was seated at the farthest table, and, obeying a motion of his conductor's hand, Kung seated himself at the second, greatly wondering what was going to happen. Having already attained the rank of graduate, he was perfectly aware that the style of literary examinations was totally different to his present surroundings. The solitary cell, the careful search of the person for concealed documents which might aid the student, the preliminary forms, were all wanting. Yet he could conceive no other purpose in his present position than that of examination. The messenger, moreover, had summoned him to "come and be examined." Kung began to have misgivings that in some mysterious manner he had got into company of more than mortal attributes. But he could clearly recall all the events of the preceding day—or night, though, strangely enough, his memory was at fault as to the route between his own house and the spot where he now found himself. The time occupied in the journey, too, puzzled him; his utmost



efforts could enable him to recollect whether a few hours or several days had elapsed during the journey.

Busied with these thoughts, he was suddenly startled at hearing a rushing sound as if gigantic birds were cleaving their way through the air. A sudden darkness filled the room, succeeded by instantaneous light, and a paper upon which were inscribed eight characters fluttered down upon the table. These characters formed the subject upon which each of the two graduates was to write an essay. Very freely rendered (for they are almost untranslatable into English) they ran somewhat as follows :—"Men may have a mind for good, and a mind for evil. Yet how shall they be praised or blamed?"

The graduates set to work with the rapid pens of accomplished men, and in less than an hour handed in their productions to the officials in the dais. Kung's essay was a carefully-finished paper, in which he pointed out that good actions on the part of those endowed by nature with good temper and sympathetic feelings are rather the result of innate characteristics than of virtue practised for conscience' sake. How, then, can they be deemed worthy of the praise or reward allotted to him who overcomes his natural disposition to evil from a conviction that it is his duty to do right? Men, again, whose propensities to do evil are involuntary and a part of their nature, are not deserving of the blame allotted to him who is fully convinced that the path of virtue alone is safe and desirable. With much more to the same effect Kung shewed that the praise and blame allotted to mortals was, but too often, based rather upon the effects of their acts than upon the motives which inspired them. The officials on the dais, who were indeed *genii* of the spirit-world, though Kung was not as yet quite certain of the fact, were loud in their approval of the ingenuity which Kung had shewn in his essay, while that of the other graduate was not considered as entitling him to such particular praise. Addressing Kung, the presiding examiner said to him :

"There is in the province of Honan a city which desires to place itself under the protection of a tutelary saint. From the discrimination you have evinced in your essay we are convinced that you are fitted for the post, and we therefore nominate you thereto."

Kung immediately perceived that his half-formed suspicions were correct, and that he was indeed amongst the denizens of the spirit-world. Prostrating himself, and nine times performing with due reverence the "Kow-tow," he burst into tears, and said :

"Your servant is indeed unworthy of the high honours which

your excellencies vouchsafe to bestow upon him. Yet while unwilling to accept, how can so contemptible a mortal refuse them? I would, however, humbly beg to state that I have an aged mother, who is over seventy years of age, and is without any one to look to, to support her, should I, the sole help of her declining years, be cut off. I would venture to entreat that you would graciously permit me to remain with her until her term of life, appointed by all-powerful Heaven, is finished. Then shall I indeed gratefully receive the honour destined for me, and repair hither to obey the commands you may be pleased to give."

Hearing the request thus humbly made, the chief of the spirit-kings forthwith called one of the attendants, and directed him to search the Register, in which was recorded the span of life allotted to various mortals, and inform him of the age specified against the name of Kung's mother. A long-bearded man advanced, and holding on high the Register, turned to the page and read that Heaven had allotted to her a lifetime of seventy-nine years, so that nearly nine more remained before her spirit was to leave her body. The announcement caused some perplexity amongst the members of the august tribunal. Presently, however, the President remarked that it did not much matter.

"Let," said he, "Chang, the other graduate who has proved himself capable, though less worthy, be directed to take charge of the seals of office for him for nine years. That will remedy present inconvenience, and still provide the fittest candidate for the post when he shall be ready to take it."

Then, addressing Kung, he said :

"By the laws which govern the decrees of our tribunal, you should by rights immediately proceed to the post to which, in consideration of your manifest talent, and your blameless life, you have been elected. But, impressed by your filial piety and natural kindness of disposition, I give you nine years' leave in which to bestow that care upon your parent which you desire to render. At the expiration of that time, I shall again summon you here. You may now depart."

He then spoke a few words of admonition to the graduate Chang, who with Kung made his obeisance, and the two retired from the hall.

Taking Kung by the hand, Chang led him out of the building and accompanied him to the outskirts of the city. In the course of conversation, Chang stated that he was a native of Chang-Shan, and, like Kung, had been unsuccessful in obtaining the promotion to which his abilities and acquirements fairly entitled him. Before parting, Chang gave to his companion a piece of poetry of his own composition, in which mention was

made of flowers and wine, perpetual spring, and other subjects usually dealt with by those who excel in the matter of poetry. "Night, to the lover of literature and practiser of virtue, was bright in itself without lamps or moon," with much more to the same effect. The piece was unimportant, but deserves to be remembered, as it subsequently served to identify the author. After an interchange of mutual compliments, the two parted, and Kung, mounting his horse, took leave of his friend. After a short time he reached home.

Scarcely had he dismounted and reached his room, than, strange to relate, he found himself in an open coffin, rousing himself just like one awakened from a dream. Friends and visitors stood around him, and he learned to his great surprise that he had been supposed dead for three days. Great was the astonishment of his neighbours at what they regarded as his miraculous recovery, and the joy of his aged mother at receiving back the son she had deemed lost to her for ever, may easily be imagined. It appeared that the lid of the coffin had been laid on its top, and that the watchers heard a noise from within which terrified them exceedingly. His mother, who was hastily summoned, removed the lid and raised the supposed lifeless body in her arms; after a long time he came to himself, and his first inquiry was as to what had happened to Chang. People were sent out to inquire, and returned to say that he had died on the day but one preceding. Kung was then thoroughly convinced that he had visited the spirit world.

Nine years passed away, and Kung's mother paid the debt of nature just as it had been predicted to him. Kung performed the funeral rites, and having settled all his worldly affairs, purified himself, went to his house, and lying down upon his bed, quietly yielded up the ghost. The fact that one so favoured by the gods had died, was announced to his sole surviving relatives—the parents of his wife, who had died childless at a period anterior to the date at which the story opens—in a manner both gratifying and unexpected.

One day their house, situated near the west gate of the city, was surrounded by a vast number of chariots and horses, with ornamented harness and scarlet bridles, amidst which rode Kung, dressed in resplendent raiment, who dismounted and paid his respects to his aged parents-in-law. The whole household was filled with fear and trembling—for they knew not that he had become deified—and hastened to make inquiries. They then learned that he had just died. Before his death Kung wrote an account of his experiences in the spirit-world, which was unfortunately lost during the troublous times which succeeded his



decease, when the Taiping rebellion spread ruin and desolation throughout the province. The foregoing is, in all material details, however, a correct record of the events therein described.

Thus far the legend; which, if destitute of any striking event, contains some incidental allusions worthy the attention of all who take an interest in a people of which so little is known as the Chinese. Firstly, of course, is the singular idea of competition in the hereafter for a deified post in the local pantheon. But the respect paid to filial piety, the belief in denizens of the spirit-world exercising functions analogous to those fulfilled by individuals on earth; the evidence of a belief in a material hereafter, shown by the allusion to "the seals of office;"—these and other points present subjects for curious consideration. Much might be said on Chinese beliefs in spiritualistic rappings and communications. But for the present we leave the subject, with the remark that there is little recorded in the annals of Western beliefs, no matter how extravagant, which cannot find a parallel in the curious tales and legends that abound in the written and oral traditions of the "Middle Kingdom."

## GRISELDA.\*

“Ye who believe in affection that hopes and endures, and is patient,  
 Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of a woman’s devotion,  
 List to the mournful tradition.”

LONGFELLOW.

## PART I.

’MONG the gay nobles of Firenze’s plains,  
 Though still a ruddy stripling with fair cheek  
 And raven locks, not one in prowess vied  
 With Gualtiero, by ten male descents  
 Count of Saluzzo. For he sat his steed  
 As none beside; and when he blew the horn  
 And sallied to the field with hawk and hound  
 All people cried, “Behold the noble son  
 “Of noble sires, the glory of his race.”  
 Proud was Saluzzo of her youthful count:  
 And sooth he was of a right ancient line  
 The only hope; and fear was in the hearts  
 Of Gualtiero’s vassals, day and night,  
 That should some accident by flood or field  
 Betide their lord, that fair domain should pass  
 To distant strangers—men both rude and fierce.

\* It is scarcely necessary to tell the well-informed reader that the story of Griselda forms the concluding Novel of the Tenth Day in the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, and that it has been often quoted as the most touching of all the tales which make up that most witty and amusing book. These lines are nothing more than an attempt to put the story simply and plainly into blank verse. Since writing these lines the author has read for the first time the story of Griselda, as it is put into the mouth of the Clerk of Oxenford, in the ‘*Canterbury Tales*’ of Chaucer, who says that he learned it from Petrarch. Twenty different versions of the story in French were known to exist as early as the 14th century; it has been also translated into Latin, and has been made the subject of more than one play in French and in English. Ellis, in his *Notes to Way’s Fables*, tells us that in *Griselda* its author “intended to describe a perfect female character, exposed to the severest trials, submitting without a murmur to unmerited cruelty, disarming her tormentor by gentleness and patience, and finally recompensed for her virtues by transports rendered more exquisite by her sufferings.”

Now thrice six years had passed since first he played  
 A tiny infant at his mother's knee  
 In fair Saluzzo's halls ; but she, worn down  
 With saddest heritage of widowed woe,  
 All broken-hearted when scarce past her prime,  
 To her last rest had gone. Gualtiero mused  
 Upon her memory, oft would dwell upon  
 The soft, dark lineaments of her sweet face.  
 Such thoughts would temper and subdue to tears  
 The pride which smouldered in his breast ; for she  
 Had ruled his wayward temper as a child,  
 And as he grew to boyhood. He recalled  
 The long dark tresses of her raven hair  
 Which she would bind across her marble brow,  
 Her tender, loving eyes, her princely mien,  
 And the white flowing veil which swept athwart  
 The sable tokens of her widowed state.

And he would cry, when weary of the chase,  
 " O ! the drear sadness of this lonely state,  
 " The vacant chamber where my mother spun,  
 " The vacant chair wherein my mother sate,  
 " She whom they say my father ' Constance ' called !  
 " When shall these halls such other inmate greet  
 " As shall be fit to stand where Constance stood ?  
 " No, that can never be : I'll hie me then  
 " Back to the chase, and in my hounds and hawks  
 " Find some poor solace for a mother's loss.  
 " I see no maidens, and I care to see  
 " None, who resemble her in beauty, or  
 " In priceless, peerless worth : and yet 'tis hard  
 " To live unloved, to see no loving face,  
 " To feel no loving hand, to know no heart  
 " That beats and throbs responsive to one's own.  
 " My mother's peer is far to seek ; and I  
 " Will ne'er disgrace her memory, or take  
 " A partner to myself unworthy her."

Meantime a murmur in Saluzzo's streets  
 Is buzzed, then noised abroad ; then rumour wakes  
 Her hundred tongues ; and wrathful citizens  
 Cry out in discontent.

" It shames us much  
 " Year after year to see untenanted



"Those halls in which the noble Constance shone  
 "Our gracious Countess, cheered each burgher's heart  
 "By kindly word or deed of charity.  
 "See how unpeopled now our market-place,  
 "Our streets, our shops, once busy haunts of men,  
 "And hives of industry; how stand our looms,  
 "All idle, and how idleness breeds sloth,  
 "And sloth breeds poverty and discontent.  
 "Oh that our Count would choose some noble bride  
 "Of Venice, Padua, or of Modena,  
 "And give us back a Constance in his choice."

It happened thus one day, one festival :  
 High mass was over, and, as wont it was,  
 The burghers of Saluzzo and their wives,  
 Children and all, a goodly retinue,  
 Walked on the terrace 'neath the castle wall  
 To greet the Count upon his natal day.  
 And Gualtiero stood amid the crowd  
 Conspicuous by gay dress and manly gait,  
 And easy courteous bearing; and he spake  
 Kind words of friendship now to this, now that,  
 Waving his plumèd bonnet to the crowd.

Stepped forth six burghers from the rest, and said  
 "Most noble Count, son of a noble sire,  
 "Nor a less noble mother's son, we crave  
 "Audience and due attention at thine hands.  
 "We were thy father's vassals; we are thine;  
 "And that allegiance that we paid to him  
 "We owe his son; nor shall it e'er be said  
 "That we were wanting in due loyalty.  
 "We love thy mother's and thy father's child,  
 "And we would shed for thee, if need, our blood.  
 "Thou wilt not therefore turn a cold, deaf ear  
 "To our entreaty if plain words we speak.

"Our city prospers, as thou seest, amiss :  
 "Its trade, its commerce, and its populace  
 "Are not as once they were, and still might be;  
 "And much it troubles us lest aught befall  
 "Our youthful Count, and this free, loyal state  
 "Pass to the appanage of unworthy lords.  
 "There is no heir to thine ancestral line;

"And, reft of her who queenlike should preside  
 "Over thy court, whose presence should be felt  
 "Like that of the meridian sun, to shed  
 "Light, warmth and plenty round, our city pines.  
 "'Tis but a little step from murmurings deep  
 "To discontent, and wrath rebellion breeds.  
 "Leave us not then without a lord, nor live  
 "Heirless, but think thee of our earnest prayer.  
 "And if thou lov'st the chase and still wilt seek  
 "The wild boar's lair, a huntsman, nor wilt heed  
 "Thoughts of young love, to us entrust the task  
 "To find a mate well worthy of thy bed."

"Right worthy friends and neighbours," he replied,  
 "That which ye bid me do I had resolved  
 "Wary to shun; for though full many a maid  
 "Of Northern Lombardy or our Tuscan towns  
 "Would gladly call her Gualtiero's bride,  
 "Saluzzo's Countess, yet my love to her  
 "Who gave me birth, whom still ye burghers love,  
 "Forbids me to ambition aught that is  
 "Inferior to herself; and many a mile  
 "Well might I traverse both by land and sea,  
 "Ere I beheld her equal, or in mien,  
 "Or in a loving, loyal, trusting heart.  
 "Peerless she was, and peerless yet remains,  
 "Nor can ye point to her that is her peer.  
 "Yet it mislikes me that this city fair  
 "Should risk its being or its weal on one  
 "Who bears and carries no enchanted life.  
 "So masters, if it please ye, I will strive  
 "Against mine inclination, and will seek  
 "A maiden who shall be unto your hearts :  
 "And if beside she be to me, good sirs,  
 "A loyal friend, submissive, fond, and true,  
 "It may be that I even shall rejoice  
 "To give a Countess to this city fair.  
 "But stay, one warning. Whom I choose as bride  
 "Of Gualtiero, be she who she may,  
 "Of royal, noble, or ignoble blood,  
 "Ye swear to me, right worthy sirs, that ye  
 "And all my people loyally accept  
 "And reverence, as though she were a queen

“Of gay Ravenna, or of Milan proud,  
 “Aye, or of fair Firenze, come what may.”

He spoke : the burghers swore, and straight retired ;  
 The gay crowd parted, and the terrace-path  
 Lay lonely and deserted as in knots  
 Of twain and three the burghers homeward paced,  
 Much pondering in perplexèd wonderment.  
 And Gualtiero called his hound, and stroked  
 His courser's arched neck, then as half inclined  
 To wish his words unsaid, stood in a maze ;  
 Like erst Adonis, when he heard the voice  
 Of Aphroditè by his hunter's side,  
 And heedless spurned and scorned her proffered love.

## PART II.

On the grey slope of an Abruzzian hill,  
 Where a steep bridle-path leads from the road  
 To the grim convent's portal, and a cross  
 Marks limit to the consecrated ground,  
 Fringed with a scanty flower-bed and o'erhung  
 By a dark grove of olives, intermixed  
 With pale ceringos and acacia bowers,  
 A humble cottage stood. Giannuculo,  
 Its tenant, was a labourer of the soil,  
 And sixty summer suns had bronzed his cheek.  
 With him there dwelt a daughter, passing fair,  
 The envy of each youthful villager  
 On this side and on that. Her girlhood now  
 Was scarcely passing into womanhood,  
 And yet she showed a woman's care of him  
 Who was her sire, and who with duteous lips  
 Said daily, “*De profundis*,” for the soul  
 Of her departed mother. She was fair ;  
 But not so fair as modest, pure, and chaste.  
 A violet from beneath a moss-clad stone  
 Peeping in early spring-tide did not cast  
 Its glance more shyly forth upon the vale  
 Than did Griselda when she spoke and smiled.  
 And prized was she much by her rustic sire,  
 Who called her his fair flow'et ; and his friend,  
 The *padre* of the hamlet, vowed with pride  
 That ne'er was beauty more allied with worth.



“Thrice happy,” would he say, “the swain whoe’er  
 “Shall win her heart’s affection, and shall call  
 “Griselda mistress of his humble home.”

It chanced one day, one summer eventide,  
 A stranger gay, with horses, hawks, and hounds,  
 Weary with sport, rode homeward to the town,  
 And down the western slope of the tall hill  
 Nearing the convent portal, reined his steed,  
 Then lighting, walked along and held his rein.  
 Passing the cottage of Giannuculo,  
 The stranger stayed a moment, and addressed  
 A word of greeting to the old man’s ear,  
 As basking in the evening sun he sat.  
 “How now? what, all alone? and hast thou none,  
 “Or wife, or child, to cheer thy loneliness?  
 “’Faith, by the Virgin, you and I, good sir,  
 “Are our own masters.”

Scarce the word was spoke  
 When, singing as she tripped along the path,  
 From the pure fountain at the garden side,  
 Bearing a draught of water fresh and clear,  
 Griselda came. The stranger stepped aside,  
 Much wondering to behold vision so fair.  
 Then spoke his heart unto his inner self,—  
 “Poor though she be, that maiden fair, I vow,  
 “Before this moon hath waned and waxed again—  
 “No! that were long to wait; this very eve—  
 “Shall be Saluzzo’s countess and the bride  
 “Of Gualtiero!”

And no sooner thought  
 Had passèd into speech, than he declared  
 Unto Giannuculo his love.

“I read  
 “In this sweet maiden’s features all I seek  
 “To gladden and to grace the palace halls  
 “In which erewhile my mother Constance shone.  
 “I am Saluzzo’s count; and in her eyes  
 “I see the eyes of Constance; in her gait,  
 “The princely queen-like mien; those raven locks,  
 “The marble of her forehead,—all, I swear,  
 “Remember me of what my mother was.”

“You do much honour to our poor estate,

"Most noble Count; and if it be thy will  
 "To wed my daughter, let that will be done.  
 "Only I fear that she may climb too high,  
 "And take her seat upon a throne aw hence  
 "One day her downfall shall more grievous be."

"Fear not, my friend; but first, in order due,  
 "'Tis fitting that I question her one word.  
 "I am Saluzzo's Count; I seek thy hand,  
 "Thy hand and heart; say, wilt thou bend thy will,  
 "Whole and entire, and in no stinted share,  
 "Unto my will obedient, *come what may*;  
 "Nor shrink to render service to thy lord,  
 "Who loves thee, but whose will must be thy law?"

The maiden laid her pitcher on the ground;  
 Stood for a moment half amazed and shy,  
 Then looked to heaven, as though she would attest  
 The saints to her resolve, and said "I will."

He led her by the hand, and bade her strip  
 Her poor apparel, save one threadbare smock;  
 Then called for richest garments, silken hose,  
 Tunic and corselet, and a flowing robe  
 Of satin tissue; and a coronet  
 Placed on her unkempt hair, and cried aloud,  
 As flocked the wond'ring rustics to the view,  
 "Behold the maiden whom I make this day  
 "My wife, Saluzzo's Countess." Greeting next  
 Honest Giannuculo, forthwith he set  
 Griselda on a palfrey, and she rode  
 On his left hand straight to the palace gates.  
 Forth came the heralds at the gladsome news  
 And cried, "Behold our lord Gualtiero's self,  
 "And greet his bride with loud and glad acclaim,  
 "For she is worthy of a princely mate."  
 The trumpets echoed back the voice of praise,  
 Pealed the sweet bells of churches, blazed the fires,  
 And glad Saluzzo woke to life once more.

### PART III.

Twelve months, twelve happy months have come and gone,  
 And Gualtiero with a deep'ning love

Doth cherish his fair bride, and ever fresh  
 Appear the tokens of his fond regard.  
 But when to a wife's title she did add  
 The name of mother, and a daughter fair  
 She bore, his countenance became estranged :  
 Harsh words he uttered in his angry mood ;—  
 " What ! can ye bear no son ? In vain have I  
 " Sought out a bride in thee, if issue none  
 " Or none but female issue be my lot.  
 " Hark how my subjects mutter in their scorn,  
 " Curse thy mean parentage and poor estate :  
 " Thou art not what I hoped to find in thee.  
 " That child thou nursest in thine arms, I cast  
 " Upon the bleak hill's side, to dogs and birds  
 " A fitting prey. Now dost thou know thy fate !"  
 To whom Griselda, " Good, my lord ; but why  
 " Thus tax me with reproof ? Nay, deal with me  
 " As best befits thy weal and happiness.  
 " Did I not promise fealty to my lord ?  
 " I bow my will submissive unto thine.  
 " I am by birth the meanest of the race  
 " That owns thee master ; and I was not fit  
 " To sit advanced to such high dignity.  
 " Nay, send me back unto that humble cot  
 " Whence thou didst lead me, a plain village maid,  
 " Robeless and crownless, rich in nought beside  
 " But in the love of him who sought my love,  
 " And in the gift of honest maidenhood.  
 " Nay, if thou wilt be hard of heart, then take  
 " My tender infant, cast her to the wolves  
 " That prowl around th' Abruzzi ; she is thine :  
 " Say, didst thou not thyself engender her ?  
 " Thou sowd'st the seed I did but rear for thee.\*  
 " Yet cast her not unto the wolves, with tears  
 " I do implore thee,—with a mother's tears,—  
 " *Unless it be thy will ; and if so be,*  
 " *Thy will and God's be done.*"

Stepped forth at this  
 Two men, fierce scowling, and with threatening glance  
 Drew daggers from their sides, nor spake a word.  
 Yet stood Griselda still, and kissed her babe,  
 And made the holy sign upon her brow,

\* Compare with this sentiment the speech of Apollo in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, p. 657—666. The lines enter into details too philosophically and too physically to bear quotation here in English.



And bound a tiny cross around her neck,  
 And only cried, "*Thy will and God's be done !*  
 "It may be that the holy saints who guard  
 "Our marriage bed, will to my prayer give ear,  
 "And grant me yet a son in face and form  
 "To image forth his father's lineaments ;  
 "That son shall be a bond between us yet,  
 "And recompense my loss. *Thy will be done.*"

Twelve months, twelve anxious months have rollèd on,  
 And to the vacant cradle of the babe  
 Succeeds a son. Fair was his cheek, and bright  
 His eye, and dark his hair, like Constance's.  
 He grew to prattle on Griselda's knee,  
 And know her voice, and call her 'mother dear,'  
 Nor shrank in terror at the plumèd crest  
 Of Gualtiero.

As she sat one day  
 Upon the terrace, playing with her boy,  
 The father stern approached, and threatening, spake.  
 "Griselda, thou art pure, and good, and true,  
 "Nor ever hast thou failed in loyalty  
 "To me thy lord. My will is thine. 'Tis well  
 "It should be so. Then hear. My burghers all  
 "Mutter in silence, or complain aloud,  
 "A humble peasant's child should be my heir,  
 "Their future lord. 'Tis therefore meet that thou  
 "Give up this boy to share his sister's fate,  
 "And then return to that which was thy home  
 "Hard by the convent gate ; Giannuculo  
 "Will give thee welcome, and his aged heart  
 "Haply thou yet mayst cheer. Meantime my soul  
 "Yearns for a nobler mate. Say what thou wilt,  
 "My mind is fixed ; and ere to-morrow's sun  
 "Hath set, thy father's door receives thee back  
 "As naked as thou camest thence to me.  
 "And for thy son—"

"Nay, good, my lord, I bow  
 "Unto thy voice, thy word, thy will—my law.  
 "I bow, obedient ; though it wrings my heart,  
 "My very heart of hearts, not to lay down  
 "The coronet thou didst place upon my brow,  
 "But the dear name of mother, and to see

"Thy henchman bear the sweet fruit of my womb  
 "To perish on the hills. Nay, cast him not  
 "Unto the wolves, as erst—But nay, my tongue  
 "Shall ne'er give utterance to reproachful word.  
 "Gualtiero's wife shall ever worthy be  
 "Of her who was his mother. But my son—  
 "Cast him not to the wolves, *unless it be*  
 "*Thy will ; and then thy will and God's be done.*  
 "Yet ere I go upon my lonely road,  
 "A wife discrowned, yet scarce dishonoured,  
 "One word I crave. This crown, these jewels bright,  
 "This silk attire, yes, and this golden ring  
 "With which thou didst espouse my maiden hand,  
 "I give thee back, for they are thine,—no gifts,  
 "But only lent me for a little space.  
 "You bid me take the dowry that I brought ;  
 "You need no teller for to count the dross,  
 "Nor I a purse to wrap it in, far less  
 "A sumpter horse or mule to carry it.  
 "Naked you took me from my father's hands,  
 "And naked I return, such as I came,  
 "Bereft of nought, save only maidenhood ;  
 "That jewel thou canst ne'er give back to me.  
 "One little boon I ask : to hide my shame  
 "Grant me one body-robe in lieu of that  
 "Which thou, my lord, didst take. *Thy will be done."*

\* \* \* \* \*

Clad in one modest smock of simple white,  
 Ere that the morrow's sun had set, rode forth  
 In tears, Griselda, to her father's gate,  
 Weeping herself, yet more her infant son—  
 One faithful servant her sole retinue,  
 And he led back her palfrey, bathed in tears.  
 Then quick she donned again her beggar dress,  
 And fetched the pitcher from the well, and swept  
 Her father's floor, and cheered his aching heart,  
 Forgetful of her woe ; or if she thought  
 'Twas for her children.—Were they dead and gone,  
 Torn by fierce wolves, or men as fierce as they ?  
 Or did they live ? And she would cross her breast,  
 And cry, "Oh ! holy mother of the Christ,  
 "Grant me the gift of patience, to control  
 "The throbblings of a wife's, a mother's, heart.

“ God’s will and thine be done, and his to whom  
 “ I still am true, a wife and yet no wife.”

Ten years, ten weary years have rollèd on ;  
 Griselda sits within her father’s cot,  
 And save unto the village chapel, or  
 The convent gate, ne’er hath she wandered forth,  
 But ever-patient and without complaint,  
 Bearing the silent burden of her woe,  
 Hath lived an angel’s life. Giannuculo  
 Blessed day by day his child, so pure, so fair,  
 So woe-worn, yet so meek, amid her woes ;  
 And cried “ Heaven pardon him who did thee wrong !”

One summer morn, twelve years the very day  
 Since that Griselda in her cottage home  
 Had first beheld her lord—in hottest haste  
 A horseman reins his steed before the door  
 Where sits Giannuculo in pensive mood.  
 “ The Count, my lord and master and thine own,  
 “ Hath sent to call thy daughter, fair Griselde,  
 “ Upon the pain of fealty, to appear  
 “ This day within his palace-gates. Once more  
 “ Saluzzo joys to learn its lord, the Count,  
 “ Our gracious Gualtiero, hath prepared  
 “ His halls to welcome a new bride, as fair  
 “ As was Griselda, and of nobler blood.  
 “ To-morrow,—for the Court of Rome meanwhile  
 “ Hath granted dispensation for the deed—  
 “ God’s priest before God’s altar shall stand forth  
 “ And publicly proclaim our noble chief  
 “ And a fair daughter of Count Panago,  
 “ In God’s name and the Church’s, man and wife.  
 “ And need there is that every chamber shine  
 “ Beswept and garnished, that the palace smile  
 “ Resplendent, as befits a bridal day.  
 “ Griselda’s hands are not ill-used to toil ;  
 “ Griselda’s eyes will keep good watch and ward  
 “ Over the kitchen and the banquet-hall.  
 “ Say, shall she come obedient to my voice ?”

The morrow’s sun arose. Griselda went,  
 She swept the palace halls, garnished the floor,



The couches, each familiar guest-chamber  
Dressed in its gayest colours, and came forth  
To greet the Countess as she stepped from off  
Her palfrey at the gate. The guests are there,  
And all is expectation, and the feast  
Will soon begin.

“And now, what thinkest thou,  
“Griselda, of my bride?” the Count exclaimed—  
“Sooth she is fair, yes, passing fair, and fit  
“To deck these halls, as none afore her was.  
“And, if she be as good as she is fair,  
“You may reign happy in Saluzzo’s halls,  
“And hand your heritage to a long line  
“Of noble sons, sprung from your princely loins.  
“But oh! if I may breathe one prayer, I pray  
“Thou mayst not rack this youthful maiden’s heart  
“As thou hast racked another’s. Yet withal  
“*Thy will, my lord, and God’s own will be done.*  
“Young is thy bride, and nurtured tenderly;  
“I was a tougher sapling, and I knew  
“To bend me to the storm, as one who learnt  
“Life’s fitful moods, and as a child was schooled  
“To hardships, aye, from earliest infancy.  
“Yet stay—what mean this locket, and this cross?  
“It is the same which twelve long years ago  
“I bound about that neck—the neck of her,  
“My first-born child! Oh! God and saints of Heaven,  
“Do I yet see my own, my long-lost child?  
“And by her side, so like their father’s face,  
“Her brother? or does sight bemock my heart,  
“My mother’s heart, or is it all a dream?  
“*God’s will and Gualtiero’s will be done!*”  
She spoke, and swooning, sank upon the ground.

Then rose the Count, and every lip was still,  
Hushed in amazing silence: and he spoke:  
“Ye burghers of Saluzzo, trusty friends,  
“Worshipful sirs, ye see before ye here  
“Griselda, my most spotless, noblest bride.  
“This lady who hath stepped from off her steed,  
“And sitteth in the seat of honour there,  
“Is not a child of noble Panago,  
“But sprung from me, her sire. Griselda, see  
“In her thy long-lost daughter, and in him,  
“This noble youth, thy well-belovèd son.

"O, fair thou art, Griselda, passing fair ;  
 "Yet not so fair as noble. Say, was ere  
 "Daughter of Eve, who could so far forget  
 "Herself, her children, all save loyalty  
 "To her espousèd lord ? who patient thus  
 "Could brook to see her children wrenched perforce  
 "And cast unto the wolves, nor yet complain,  
 "Nor utter word of tenderest reproof ?  
 "Nay, that which saints and angels could not do,  
 "Griselda, thou hast done ; therefore to me  
 "Dearer thou art than all the world beside ;  
 "And once more I do greet thee here before  
 "Th' assembled burghers of this city fair  
 "The partner of my crown, my bed, my life.  
 "And here in token of my words, I vow,  
 "This day unto the very end of time  
 "Hallowed shall be through all my wide domains ;  
 "And thou, Griselda, saint and wife in one,  
 "Shalt stand in marble in our city's streets,  
 "Patient Griselda, fair, and good, and great.  
 "Much have I wronged thee ; but 'tis thine to cast  
 "A tender eye, forgiving all that wrong.  
 "It is for man to err ; but to forgive  
 "Belongs to woman and high heaven alone."

And is Griselda but a thrice told tale ?  
 And can we read no lesson in her life ?  
 Yes, such a thing there lives as biding faith,  
 Undoubting and unswerving loyalty,  
 In wedded love, yes, and in friendship too.  
 Be it a man's, be it a woman's heart,  
 Let time go on, let months roll on to years,  
 And years to ages, yet he conquers who  
 Ever endures and patiently abides,  
 Till heaven doth righteously "defend the right."  
 In every sufferer in the sacred cause  
 Of loyalty and love, Griselda lives ;  
 For pure affection "seeketh not her own,  
 "Is not provoked by trifles, evil none  
 "Doth think, but bideth patiently, all things  
 "Suffereth, endureth, beareth," to the end.

Yes, years may come, and years may glide away,  
 Fashions and forms may change, and raven locks

Turn grey with care, and hearts grow dull and cold  
That once did beat responsive to our own ;  
But loyal friendship, friendly loyalty,  
Holds on its even course, steers to the port  
Of peace and rest, though storms may rage without.  
Then fret not, loyal and devoted soul.  
The fiery torment that long time did wrack  
Griselda's heart, may wrack thine own ; and yet  
There is a silvery lining to each cloud,  
And who "in patience doth his soul possess"  
Or soon or late he will the victor be.



## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

“To resume.

“The landlady seemed surprised at my question.

“‘Mind taking her in,’ she said, ‘Lor, why should I? She’s a poor innocent. *She’s* none of your rough and tumble sort, and I am only too glad if I can be of any use to her. I suppose she has friends somewhere, if we can only find them out, but she’s in such a way now I wouldn’t ask her any questions till to-morrow. You’ll hardly believe it, but she has scarce a thing to her back. All gone. They’ve robbed her, oh they’ve robbed her; she must have led a dreadful life of late. I know what some of them old hags are. They don’t care what they do if they think you are at their mercy. They suck you dry, and turn you loose at a moment’s notice. I have put her some clean dry things, and she’s sitting in front of my fire, trembling as if her heart was broke. Every now and then I see a great tear come rolling down her cheek, and then she looks in my face and squeezes my hand, as if words were too much for her. Oh, but she’ll be right enough in the morning, after a good night’s rest. I shall try and get her to peck a morsel by-and-bye. She can’t have had a bite or sup all day. She’s worn to the bone, and her finger is black with the needle. God help us, that any poor delicate young creature such as she should come to so awful a pass. And it might have been my Kitty.’

“Here Mrs. Austin wiped her eyes with the corner of a miraculously dirty apron, but there was nothing to laugh at in the gesture, as her face and voice bespoke real feeling.

“‘If I was you,’ she presently added, ‘I wouldn’t see Miss again to-night. It would only excite her, and I think she’ll be better after a thorough rest. Besides, she’s wildlike, and I don’t wonder at it, poor thing. If you call again to-morrow morning or afternoon, just when you find it convenient, she’ll be glad to see you, I make no doubt, and then you can come to some arrangement. She’s one who’ll help herself if put in the way of doing so, depend upon it. Once she sees a turning, she’ll pluck up heart again. But they’ve crushed her, and hunted the soul out of her. She has a sweet face, and such an honest, trustful eye, it goes to one’s heart. I’ll do all I can for her, depend upon *that*. She

shall be served as if she was my own daughter, and if Kitty were here she'd tell you what *that* means.'

"After a few more words—I may add that I engaged the two second-floor rooms for a fortnight, paid the money in advance, and left what I thought necessary to provide for the immediate wants of my *protégée*—I turned to depart.

"Mrs. Austin begged me to stop a bit, till the rain showed some sign of holding up; and when I laughed at this, she begged to be allowed to send Sally out to fetch a cab, which I refusing, she took up the redoubtable oil lamp, which by this time had perfumed the whole house, and insisted on seeing me to the door in person. Perhaps she wished to do me honour, perhaps she still had lingering doubts, and wished to make sure of my leaving the premises not more heavily laden than on entering—but no, she was a simple, kind-hearted soul, and I ought to be ashamed of myself for even dropping a hint to her discredit.

"About four o'clock the next day, having obtained leave of absence from the office, I reappeared in Little Cator Street.

"Miss was up, and seated in the arm-chair by a comfortable fire in the second floor front. She was dressed in a light-coloured woollen gown of Kitty's, which was too large for her, but which at least looked warm and tidy. She was pale, and every vein was visible on the small, thin hand that rested on the table by her side. As I entered, she lifted her eyes to mine, and they filled with tears. She attempted to rise, but she was too weak, and fell back. Mrs. Austin was standing by, and gently reproved her.

"'You mustn't excite yourself,' she said; 'you are not strong enough to be moving about. Ah! sir,' turning to me, 'the poor dear's like a baby. Her strength is quite gone. She is tired out, and must keep quiet. I've been persuading her to take a little tea. I bought a beautiful loin chop, and cooked it on the bars, but she couldn't eat it. I made some nice strong broth later in the day, and you liked that, didn't you, Miss? Jim has been this morning, sir. He was sorry you were away, and said he wished there was more like you, but he was quite pleased to see Missie looking so much better. He'll be round again before he goes on his beat.'

"Missie looked up at me and smiled, but oh so sadly. She spoke, but her voice sounded like a soft wind far, far away; it was so subdued, so plaintive, and so musical.

"'Oh,' she murmured, 'you are all so good, and I am such a wretch, such a miserable, useless, forlorn thing, and if it had not been for you, and that good man who spoke to me so kindly, I might by this time have been lying cold and stiff in some dead-house.' She shuddered. 'God will reward you both,' she added, 'but I know such as you work without hope of reward, and one

day you will be angels. You will see poor creatures such as I am rising from their graves, and saying if it had not been for those noble-hearted men, who were not ashamed of helping even poor girls driven out to wander and perish in the streets, we should have been lost body and soul; we should have thrown ourselves desperately into that dark river that runs through the great pitiless city, we should not now be rising to sing the song of the blessed in heaven. Oh, God have you in His keeping. If ever you are in trouble, may He send out His angels to save you from harm. If ever people laugh at you for troubling yourself about poor outcast things like me, remember that you have not worked in vain, that one unhappy creature at least blessed you with her whole heart, that her gratitude was so great that she could not find words to express it.'

"The poor girl sunk backwards, her eyes closed, tears rushed from beneath her long dark lashes, and in spite of her efforts to repress her emotion there burst from her a convulsive sob.

" 'Now, deary, don't,' said Mrs. Austin, though her own voice was husky, 'you know it is so bad for you. And there's your tea untouched. And the toast too. Now do try and eat a bit. For my sake do. We want you to get strong and hearty again. You must not put yourself out so. Now rouse up. *That's* a dear. I knew you would. I *do* like to see you when you cheer up and look yourself again.'

" 'Please don't mind me,' said Missie, wiping her eyes. 'I am a stupid little thing, but I can't help it. If you only knew what I have gone through the last week or two!' She sobbed again, but controlled her emotion by a strong effort, and after a slight pause proceeded. 'I worked, and worked, and worked, and they were so hard, and because I was clumsy I could not earn much, and they would not let me have a moment's peace. And first one thing went and then another. And I had to pay the rent of my rooms. And Mrs. Dodget—that is my landlady—was always at me, and I did the best I could, thinking day after day that *he'd* come back, and he never came, and at last they said they wouldn't have it any longer, I was cheating them, and no better than I need be;—a flush mantled her pale face as she uttered the hateful words—'and that I had better pack up and be off, though they knew I was doing my best—look at my finger, it was the needle, you know, that made it so black—and I might have done better in time, had they given me the chance, really there wasn't so very much owing, and—and I have had nothing but some bread to eat for the last three days. You did not believe ladies could be brought so low as that, did you? I should not have believed it myself, once upon a time. I thought it was only poor wretches who had been ground down all their lives, who were left to starve. And so



you see, yesterday morning, when I could not settle the bill—and she might have known I could not do it—and had nothing left to send to—to the pawn-shop—all my gowns had gone, and most of my other things, all but what I had on, and good Mrs. Austin will tell you I had not enough to keep me warm—that wicked woman, I can't help calling her so, took me by the arm and said—

“““ You good-for-nothing, will you be off of your own accord, or shall I get my husband to turn you out? Oh!” and she made use of dreadful language that I can't repeat, and said that jail was too good for the like of me—that was her expression. So then I looked her in the face, and said—

“““ Perhaps some day you yourself will be crushed as I have been crushed. Heaven save you from being treated as you treat the poor deserted thing who speaks to you now.””

““ On that, she cried, “Be off, you brazen hussy, be off, if you don't want your face marked. I'll teach you to have any of your impudence with me. If you ain't out of the house, bag and baggage, in a trice, I'll fetch in the police.”

““ So then I turned and fled from that cruel home, and I would rather trust to the mercies of the street, to the storm, and to the dark cold night, than to the hard, vindictive woman who spoke those horrid words—it makes me shudder to repeat them.

““ I was penniless, and oh, so hungry, and my knees trembled under me, and my eyes swam so I could see nothing distinctly, and I wandered into the park and sate down near the palace, and watched the ladies going by in their carriages, and the people all so busy, and the little children playing about, and the sun shining, and the blue sky, and I felt as if my heart would burst. I thought of when I used to be a giddy happy girl, and I could see the dear old house, and the wall covered with fruit trees, and the sundial on the smooth green lawn, and the great holly hedge, and my own little garden which looked out across the fields, and the cows coming home from being milked, and the sun sinking down behind the great hill near Crambourne—oh, dear, oh, dear; you must forgive me, I can't help being foolish—and then I don't know what happened. I fainted perhaps, or I dropped asleep, but when I came round again it was chilly and the sky was clouded over, and the wind was singing a deep solemn tune in the trees overhead, and great drops of rain were falling, and I knew that a wet evening was setting in. And then I felt so miserable I didn't know what to do. I saw others near me as wretched looking as myself, but I didn't like to speak to them. I thought of going up to one of the policemen, but he had such a stern face. At last a very fierce-looking elderly gentleman came along; he had heavy, knitted brows, and a long grey beard, and a thick moustache, and

his face was all over wrinkles, some of them so deep and black that they seemed to have been dug out with a knife ; he stooped a little and walked lame, and leant on a stick. As he drew nearer I looked up at him, and his eye met mine—it seemed to flash fire and to scorch me where it fell. He fumbled hastily at his watch-chain. I was frightened, but could not look away from him. He drew some money from his pocket, and as he passed he dropped it into my lap.’

“ ‘God have mercy upon you, you poor creature,’ I heard him mutter as he went by ; ‘God forgive you, and me too.’ ”

“ ‘I clutched the halfcrown, and my face burned all over. I had never received money in this way before ; I was a beggar then. I wanted to give it back, but when I tried to rise, I dropped heavily into the seat again. I grasped the railings round a tree that stood near and drew myself up, but then came on that swimming in my eyes and I could see nothing plainly. I put my hand to my forehead and stood quiet for a moment ; when I looked up again, he was gone ; he had turned out of the park by one of the side gates, or he had become mixed up with the crowd. And I was so hungry and weak. I dragged myself along, forgetting my pride, and longing, and longing so to find a baker’s shop. I crossed, I hardly know how, to Piccadilly, and I turned out of it again with a shudder, for I recollected passing down it for the first time with my darling by my side, and by-and-bye I came to a long quiet street with just such a shop as I wanted to find.

“ ‘I went in and laid down my money, and, almost without knowing what I did, took up a small loaf.

“ ‘The man behind the counter, who was a red-faced, savage-looking fellow, eyed me suspiciously, tested the coin, flung it back, snatched the bread from my hand, and cried out “Bad.”

“ ‘I staggered against the wall. Rough as the man seemed, his pity was moved.

“ ‘“Poor devil !” he muttered ; “she’s no shammer. Here, take the loaf, girl,” he added, in a softer tone, “and here’s twopence to get yourself a drop of white satin.”

“ ‘I received the bread and the twopence, all pride now quite crushed out of me, and with my head bent down to prevent his seeing my tears, and with a strange choking in my throat, I left the shop.

“ ‘I eat the bread ravenously and quenched my thirst at a fountain. God bless the man who first gave poor creatures water to drink in the streets. I daresay he hardly knew all the good he was doing. I *couldn’t* have gone into a public-house, and many a

poor wanderer on a hot summer day, or a parching August night, can't afford even twopence for a glass of beer.

“‘As it grew darker the weather got worse and worse. I wandered about and did not know what to do with myself. I felt, oh, so tired, and there was nowhere to rest. I became rather silly, I think. I went wandering on and on, and round and round, coming back again and again to the same place, my feet burning and sore, and with a curious singing noise in my ears, and feeling that I must keep moving on though I did not know why, and fancying now and then that I heard people quite close to me talking, and that sheep-bells were tinkling in the distance, and that my darling was coming up behind me, and that my father was a little way off speaking to old Tom Duckweed who has been on our farm thirty years. And then the street seemed to open and swallow me up, I clutched at the pavement and dragged myself along and crawled up some steps, and after that I don't know what happened. The next thing I heard was a deep monotonous voice that I somehow connected with old Mr. Latchmere and the wind-up of his Sunday afternoon sermon; and then I felt myself shaken, and I opened my eyes, but I could see nothing clearly, I seemed to be under water. And then something cold dropped into my hand, I suppose it was money, and by-and-bye I heard a second voice, and then the two voices together, and I felt comforted, I am sure I can't tell why, I suppose it was the kind things you were saying. I could not hear the words themselves, but when a good man speaks pityingly his tones are soothing and gentle like the hymn they sing at the end of the service on Sunday evenings. I need not tell you any more. If you and that kind policeman had not helped me, I should have been dead by this time, I am sure of that; so to you two I owe my life. It is a wretched, useless life, but I will make the best I can of it, for that is my duty to God, and my duty to you who by God's will have given it back to me. My darling will return soon, and *he* will thank you. I can't imagine what has kept him away, but I dream of him at night, and I am sure he will not be long. He would be, oh, so unhappy if he knew how I had been served. He loves me too much to keep away longer than he can help. I don't think I could live without him. I pray for him always; I think he prays for me—he used not to be religious, but he is now. He is the bravest, kindest, handsomest man in the world. He has my whole heart. I used to be a cold little thing, and I did not think I could ever love. But I love *him*, oh, yes, more, far more, than I can tell. God keep him. God restore him to me soon. Oh, how I pine to see the face of my darling.’



"Mrs. Austin, who had got up softly, and who was looking out of window, coughed.

"There were some books lying on the table. I had brought them from my chambers thinking they might amuse Missie as they were light, pleasant reading, and full of pictures. I took one up and began turning the leaves over, because I could not say anything, though I tried. There was something or another in my throat, and—well, my eyes were misty, perhaps with looking into the fire, and I didn't care that people should notice anything queer about me, or take me for a great baby. So I thought the book would hide my face, and I kept it up before the light, and no one could see me or fancy I wasn't quite as I should be.

"I was turning over the leaves slowly when a big card tumbled out and fluttered to the ground.

"It fell on the hearthrug, almost in front of Missie, and then I saw that it was a small coloured portrait.

"The poor girl bent forward to pick it up. Then she started.

"'Who is it?' she cried, with strange, and tremulous eagerness. 'Give it me.'

"I did so. 'It is my brother,' I answered, smiling.

"'Your brother!' she cried almost in a scream, and half rising from her chair. 'No; you are deceiving me. This is no brother of yours. Why—why, *this is Harry. This is my husband!*'"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A PAUSE.

*(Our Country Correspondent again.)*

I HAVE some papers of Dick's in my possession. He gave them to me himself, and I know he would much sooner you read them as they are than that I should attempt anything in the way of an abridgement, or tell you the rest of his story as he told it to me when we last met.

I should like you to read his MS. as I want you to know him as he really was, and not as certain people have chosen to represent him. I think it throws some light on his character.

I am afraid my poor friend's production is rather a rambling and roundabout concern, but I have not had the heart to alter it. I am of rather a rambling habit myself when I get upon paper.

Dick was very young—not more than one or two-and-twenty—when the events occurred that he describes in his diary, so I hope

you will make allowance for certain errors of taste and judgment to which he must plead guilty. The dear old fellow had rather a provoking fondness for speculation—I do not mean of a monetary kind, as indeed have most young men who try to utilize their wits, but, so far as I can make out, he seldom travelled into regions that had not been pretty well explored already. This failing—not a very amiable one, I own—you will, I trust, excuse. Possibly you yourself were guilty of something of the same kind about the time that you were pleased to mistake yourself for a genius.

Dick had a knack, too, of prosing; a common fault, equally with very old men and very young ones who are afflicted with a pet theory. Clever lads often speak as if they were prigs and humbugs merely because they are so terribly in earnest. They insist fatiguingly on commonplaces, imagining in their innocence that they are truths of startling novelty—not threadbare delusions or unpleasant facts ignored by common consent.

I doubt whether Dick behaved quite properly or fairly towards his brother. Perhaps he treated him rather worse than you or I should have done under the same circumstances. Perhaps not. But young men have no patience with the objects of their dislike, and *can't* keep their animosity under control. After all, Harry might have turned out a very passable fellow—as the world goes—if Dick had set to work with him in the right way—as, of course, you or I should have done, my neighbour—but at two-and-twenty we are not tolerant, we are readier than we are at forty for a breach of the peace, we won't wear masks or put up with shams on any account, and nothing less than to be bosom friends or sworn foes will content us.

Perhaps, too, Dick did not treat his aunt very respectfully, but I knew the old lady, and she was aggravating to a degree. The chief fault, no doubt, of my poor friend's MS. is its obtrusive air of juvenility. Its theme is that of many another youthful effusion—the heartlessness of womankind and the vanity of affairs in general.

It is consolatory to reflect that the rising generation is not really so morbidly savage, so bloodthirsty, or so misanthropic as it is occasionally pleased to represent itself.

I wonder why it is by-the-bye that in our early youth we would not unwillingly pass for that which it would offend us to be reputed at sixty? Surely we do not grow better as we grow older.

Dick was very shy, poor fellow, and admits as much.

But shy men have as often as not a reputation for excessive pride. Your man of retiring habits often in sooth has rather an exaggerated sense of his dormant powers. Give him a fair field and no favour, he mutters to himself, and he will prove to

those sniggering idiots who are quite at their ease when he is on tenter-hooks, the stuff he is made of. After all he may be a young person of quite mediocre abilities. But it is consolatory, when left out in the cold, to bask in the beams of a possible triumph to come. Revenge is sweet, even in prospective.

There is a curious phase of the shy man's life, when, having grown more at ease with the wicked world, and having abandoned his juvenile or vindictive notion of developing into a Byron or a Robespierre, he looks back and contemplates with a smile half sad, half amused, the haughty aristocrats who quite unintentionally flouted him and put him to open and public shame in the days of his boyhood.

He draws back the curtain of time, and there stands the picture, as fresh and brilliant as on the troublous day when it was first painted on his memory. Not a particularly agreeable recollection in itself, it recalls a thousand happy and tender associations. As he gazes on it he sighs, and yet he can hardly refrain from laughing.

A velvet lawn, and a clear, grey evening sky. Flowers in bright borders and in circular or diamond shaped masses of brilliant red, and blue, and yellow. A gentle wind murmuring lovers' vows through the hedges and over the moss-coated palings into the fields beyond. To the right a tent pitched, and to the left curtained windows opening from an old-fashioned red-brick house on to the trimmest of gravelled paths. In the background an ancient wall sheltered by trees, and with ivy clambering up its side, and embracing it as a pretty, frolicsome child might some grave, benignant old man. Music softened by distance floating out into the languid summer twilight from the drawing-room. A fluttering of gay dresses and the laughter of young girls rising and falling on the evening air like the ripple of pure water over a pebbly channel. Preparations on foot for a dance. The wicked ones in full attendance; the scornful dames, the contemptuous and of course contemptible esquires, the pampered retainers. Haughty worldlings, brainless votaries of fashion, as at least *one* conceives them, what would they turn out to be were facts heard in their favour?

To begin. For purseproud vicar read curate—lithe, dapper, a meek favourite with the ladies, spotless as to his attire, diffident somewhat, yet ready to oblige the exacting fair in the matter of repeated trotings after stray croquet balls.

Delusion the second. A young barrister, whiskered, confident, rising, but briefless. Certainly not Queen's Counsel.

No. 3. The medical man from the cottage on the dustiest edge of the London Road. *Item.* Not a fashionable physician, simply an unknown plodder, with daughters many but remunerative patients few.



4. A dashing young clerk from the Sluggard-in-chief's department. *Not* a cavalry officer.

5. A haughty old millionaire, white-haired, an authority on archery, an infirm squire of dames and eke of demoiselles, whilom cashier to the County Bank, with a son an artist—struggling—. *Item.* The fair who hold him captive, a couple of nieces left by a scamp of a father sixpenceless, supported wholly and not without inconvenience by the aristocrat, straitened in means, whom you contemn.

Add the curate's sister, a very nice girl, possibly scornful, but with a notion of making herself useful, given to blush, of the country, countrified, well-gloved, (though a button has burst) neat-angled, diaphanous in a washing muslin, prone to teach in the Sunday school, deft of needle, charitable as far as she can afford to be, always neat, but that not without an effort on her own part, thoroughly enjoying herself, with a heart as free and unsophisticated as a young sparrow's.

The doctor's daughters—in number three. Tall and rather bony—obtrusively so—charming, no doubt, to those who like the style, practised coquettes, (Indeed!) bound at intervals, when Sally rebels, to make their own beds and mamma's, too, to prepare the dinner or the apology for it, and even to scrub the floor. (A fact. *Vide* "Genteel poverty in the rural districts," *passim*.)

High-born damsels here approach. Puffed up, you think them, with a sense of their own importance. True, they are of noble lineage, but then, alas, of pockets how empty! *Imprimis*, Kitty, who is going out as a governess. (I have half a mind to enlist her for my ignorant self.) Susan full to a degree of disdain. Ah, but she has waited these five years for that curate and may wait five more. Elizabeth, with her flashing glances. *She* has been looking forward to this dull little *fête* for a month past. She is transported now into the seventh heaven. She will have something to talk about and think over for this long while to come. Granted, she has an insolent way of parading that little foot of hers on the big round croquet-ball that rolls about as if it rather liked being crushed. Who shall blame her? In the mode are her *bottines*, but not of the latest. Her others—deplorable fact, she has but one pair besides—are almost in holes; so she says, and her motto is economy. "But," returns that grumpy papa, "boots cost money." Humiliating truth; even Fays, Lorelei's, and Dryads are the prey of venial tradesmen!

They—a generic term, *i.e.*, the "family"—had a scanty knuckle of veal and rice for dinner to day—an ungenerous dish—and that butcher who, thus far accommodating, has let his bill run on for—

let me see?—the rascal asks insolently, when will it be settled; will it be paid at all?

Pampered menials. Betsy, the housemaid, a bluff, clumsy girl, but innocent, the product—creditable on the whole—of one Rawstalks, farm-labourer. Old Ben Sawdust, who is useful at most things, drives the trap, minds the garden, tries his best, abstains from strong liquors, and would do better if he could.

And lo these are the folks by whom your shy young man is stirred as to bile. Verily odd it seems on looking back, but *mauvaise honte*, what pity has the fiend? She makes us a misery to ourselves and a nuisance to other people; she torments us and befools us at the same time.

Well *now* what right have I to complain of poor Dick's tendency to meander? Unknown reader, kindly pardon two criminals equally guilty—my old friend and his apologist. I am afraid my blundering prologue will only make bad matters worse. I fear it will stir your impatience the more. What I have said was well-meant, but I have been run away with—or have run away with you—unconscionably.

By-the-bye, I wonder if I could keep to the turnpike road if I tried. I doubt it. It is as difficult for me to march right ahead as for a child who has never learnt the art of drawing to describe a straight line.

Well, poor Dick had his faults, but he was a good fellow. If he was a little prosy at times, why, so am I and a few others that I could name as well. Like myself he was deficient in tact; unlike myself he took a gloomy view of people and things in general. No, I am thankful to say I don't do *that*, and *why*, let me ask? Simply because he was, and I am *not*, a victim to that terrible shyness, that unconquerable diffidence the theme of my lecture. He had lived toomuch in solitude; he knew nothing of the world.

Parents, a word with you. If you have any feeling at all for your children, for goodness' sake don't let them grow up solitaries and hobbledehoys. Take them out of the companionship of ignorant servants and of their own crude, stagnating thoughts as soon as possible. If you want to see them happy and at ease,—if you wish to save them from grim self-tormentings, from the absurdest misconceptions not unlikely to prove a life-long plague, let them mix freely in their earlier years with those of their own age and station.

Don't imagine that you have done enough for them merely by sending them to school. There are other things to be learnt besides geography and grammar—manners to wit. Self-conceit is a terrible vice of course, but self-distrust is something ten thousand times worse. A man who has no confidence at all in

his own powers of pleasing has a terrible drag on all his chances of success. If on the contrary he possess a fair degree of tact he has the pull over men more than his equals in ability.

Very stale and slightly disreputable\* doctrine this whispers a certain demure critic at my elbow. True, oh objector; but it is a fragment of common sense, and it is a sort of duty every now and then to dig up for re-inspection familiar truths assented to lazily but only half carried into practice. It is a fact not sufficiently recognized in this wide-awake world of ours that after a certain period of neglect a common-place once more becomes a novelty. Refer to the "Markham" of early childhood, and you will find that this theory of old truths being ground young again is not merely a myth of the imagination. Why had the Gospel to be preached afresh in the sixteenth century? Because truths that were familiar once upon a time had been buried under rubbish and forgotten. To the subjects of King Henry VIII. certain facts were startling novelties, though they had been familiar enough to the world when it was a few hundred years younger.

No, let the hermits and fools say what they please, "parts" are not everything. Edgeworthian "prudence" is not everything. It is difficult to overrate the advantages and importance of what some one has called the "education of good society."

I have done.

Of all my observations probably this last is the most welcome to the reader.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF RICHARD DARLINGTON.

AFFAIRS are taking such an odd turn that I have made up my mind to keep an account of everything that happens.

I shall write down the last thing at night all that has occurred during the day.

I have made up my mind to do this, though I dislike keeping a diary as much as I do reading one. A genuine composition of this sort is usually a miracle of dulness and self-complacency. As for a sham diary in a novel, it is almost as tedious as a story told in a series of letters; besides which it generally bears very little resemblance to the straggling unmethodical diary of everyday life. By and bye I may be glad to have kept an accurate record of passing events; a *bonâ fide* account of everything that took place within a certain date may some day or other be useful to my friends—or enemies.

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\* But why "disreputable," asks the reader. Because, madam, in no moral story-book yet written have politeness and gentlemanly tact been estimated at their true value. On the contrary polished manners have been lectured out of countenance as the natural antithesis to prudence, purity of character, and worldly wisdom.



Thanks, thou benevolent demon who whisperest over my shoulder.

Yes, my protégée's story holds water capitally. It staggered me at first. I thought there must be a mistake somewhere, or that it was a cunning "plant,"—in more civilized language a cleverly devised trick.

Harry, too, of all people in the world.

Well, I never loved him, but I shall be sorry if he turns out such a scamp as he seems to be. I never had any faith in the purity of the little gentleman's morals, but to discover that he is a sucking Don Juan. He must have carried out his plans ingeniously, and yet why did he resort to a marriage at all? I suppose he tried to succeed by other means and failed.

What a charitable supposition, by the bye.

I used to think him too coldly calculating ever to be carried away by passion into imprudence of this sort. Having once married the woman why didn't he stick to her and make the best of a bad job? Surely he could not hope to escape detection. Did he marry her of his own accord, I wonder, or was he coaxed or frightened into doing so? He is a coward, I verily believe, but who was there to threaten him. If the girl speaks the truth she has no relations now living in England; surely she herself could not have terrified my poor dear brother into this rash act. She seems to worship him, really to admire him; and though she *may* be acting she does not look as if she were. I suppose she is a good hand at persuasion. But altogether the affair is a puzzle. It seems villany of the rashest kind without any adequate motive.

Can it possibly be a mistake of that girl's after all?

And yet with the proofs I have before me how can that be? It is not a sham marriage, that is very certain; and it seems pretty clear that *her* Harry and *my* Harry are the same. But has he really deserted her? I know he has been down at Culverton for the last fortnight, and before that—let me see; did not I hear something about a visit to Wales? What did I do with that letter, I wonder? Burnt it, probably; I never let family correspondence accumulate. But I read it as I am afraid I read much from home, so carelessly that I can't be sure about its contents. Well, I will clear the matter up somehow or another before long, and I must own I am very curious to see how it will all end.'

Am I glad that Harry is, or at all events may soon be, in as pretty a pickle as often falls to the lot of frail humanity. I ought to be if I have a scrap of consistency in my nature. I always detested the little rogue—in my way—but I doubt now whether I really *hated* him. I am a fellow of a contemptibly vacillating turn of mind. People have often told me so. People, I notice,

are always very glad to tell you anything particularly disagreeable. And I begin to think they were right. I have not an iron will. I can't make up my mind, and be sure that I shall never under any circumstances swerve from my purpose. I can't nurse my rage, in the good old theatrical style, for years. I can't bottle up my malice and be sure that it will be all the better for keeping. I am passionate, but I am afraid I am not malignant. Yes, afraid. Were I a thoroughgoing brute, did I cling to my hatred, did I fondle it and go through the *vendetta* business *à la mode*, I might be more consistent and persevering in better things. I don't believe I have any strength of mind at all. I don't believe I shall ever really be a successful man because I am sure in my heart of hearts that I can't be obstinately faithful to anything. Not true to your hatred, to what then *can* you be true? A bitter foe to-day, an indifferent looker-on to-morrow; in what will you persevere if not in your enmities?

I am not Jesuitically patient. If you can only wait and manage to feel the same a month hence that you do for the time being, the chances are that you will tire your opponent out. But I am digressing into platitudes.

Surely my eyes ought to gleam with malicious joy; surely I ought to gnaw my lips with gratified hate. And yet I don't, though I am sure I should be puzzled to say why. Religious influences, suggests an elderly lady reader. Well, madam, it may be so, but I doubt it. A lazy forgiving disposition is as much a matter of temperament as of anything else. Believe me I have waited for this moment a long while, and yet now that it has come I am really rather sorry than otherwise. You shake your head, ghost of the late M. Rochefoucauld. We have a wee pleasure, you tell us, even in the troubles of our best friends. Have we? May I be permitted to call that notable proposition of yours in question? May I protest against your answering for the whole world out of the depths of your own internal consciousness? Certainly you have this advantage over me, my defunct philosopher,—however delusive your theory may be, it has been stereotyped into a proverb, and so, to a certain extent, it is beyond my reach.

How difficult it is to demolish a *bon mot*. A smart saying need only be plausible and it will last for ages. It will be repeated over and over again till it comes to be accepted as a self-evident truth. It will lead to all sorts of absurdities, to all sorts of mischief, and yet how can you assail it? It is not easy to sneer down a sneer. You can't confound a proverb by a proverb. And yet how can you fight seriously with a thing that is half a jest? Yonder knave in cap and bells, flourishing a bladder full of peas, is a sad nuisance,

and yet if you were to grapple with him in good earnest, you would only make yourself a laughing-stock. Wit starts a plausible fallacy, and to that fallacy you must do homage, in spite of your better judgment, till the crack of doom.

So for peace sake and policy's sake, I will own that I am just the least bit in the world gratified, though I don't feel so at all. But if, after professing hatred, I were to admit that I felt sorry, I should have one knowing dog chuckling to this side of me, and another knowing dog winking to the other. If after vowing vengeance I were to relent, there are lily-livered scoundrels who would mutter to themselves "it does not matter how we offend this fellow in the future, he has not the heart to exact vengeance." Ah, if I could only be a little more hard-hearted, I am sure I should gain immensely in popular esteem; at all events there are certain people who would no longer dare to worry me as they do at present.

Mine will be a fine diary, a most useful chronicle of events, if instead of attending to business I wander away into reverie, as I am doing at present. It is time to pull up. But stop, there is some one at the door, I must lay this by till the afternoon.

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My mood is changed. I fancy that I am not quite so forgiving as I was a few hours ago. I am certainly not in the gushing humour that I was in this morning.

There has been a change too in the weather. Pray don't laugh at me when I say that though a young man I have occasional reminders that I possess a liver. It offends in the one particular of being torpid. Probably this is only another way of saying that I do not take enough exercise, that I live too much alone, that I am careless about my food and need an occasional dose of blue pill. But let that pass, and if my reader be a homœopathist he is at liberty to denounce calomel, and to suffer indigestion to his heart's content.

When the sun shines and all things are favourable, I am as worthy a member of society as you would meet in a day's walk. But when the fogs rise, and rain and wind and settled gloom are the order of the time, I begin to think I have been very ill used. "Man delights not me, nor woman neither." I have a lively sympathy with the late Prince Hamlet, who seems to have been troubled in much the same way that I am myself. My bile is stirred up; I lose all my mirth, I forego all my customs and exercises, and when I look out at the drizzling rain and perspiring chimney-pots, I feel without doubt that this most excellent canopy, the air, is no other thing than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.



I am not regularly out of sorts just yet, but my lips are parched, I have a dull aching pain between my shoulder blades, my head is confused, and dark specks hover between my eyes and the paper, so that writing is disagreeable to me.

I begin now to ask myself the questions I propounded in the morning, and I am bound to say that the answers I receive are not quite so satisfactory.

God forgive me if I am not so sorry as I ought to be. I never loved Harry and I never shall love him. I think I feel a little regret, but I am not quite sure. Wohoa my muse! I am getting on too fast. After all he may have had nothing to do with this wretched business. I am not the wisest person in the world—as probably the reader by this time is pretty well aware—and I may have been taken in; my half-starved *protégée* may have been deceived by a fancied likeness. I shall not bother myself with any more conjectures. It may all be a ridiculous mistake. I hope it is.

I did not expect to be going back to Culverton so soon. I don't suppose any one there will be particularly glad to see me. However, I ought not to complain, for I never took much trouble to please my esteemed relations. Sir Francis will frown and twitch his head—it is a nervous and disconcerting trick that he has whenever he is at all unpleasantly surprised. Aunt Mary will look mildly astonished and say with well-bred indifference, “Well, I am sure we are all very glad to see you,” and after that she will go on with her needlework. What will Master Harry say, I wonder. Nothing at all most likely, I am beneath his contempt, if in luck I may be honoured with a grunt or a sneer, but I daresay in the course of an hour or two he will begin to alter his tone.

Yes, I am vicious; not a doubt of it. My secret desires and my good resolutions are at variance. It is not a very Christian aspiration, but my dear charming brother is an old enemy of mine, and I really think I should be glad to be able to frighten him.

The more I try to reconcile myself to the little scoundrel, the more hateful he seems to me. There is something in this that I can't quite fathom. I think he must have done me an ill-turn that I have not yet found out. Woe betide him if he has. I think I could develop into a pretty good hater.

Pooh! how weak, how silly, how childish all this is; I ought to be ashamed of myself.

I shall see Ella. Will *she* have a kind word to say to me? No, no, I can expect nothing from *her*.

I wonder why everyone dislikes me so? Dislikes?—despises would be the proper word. I might hope to conquer hate, but contempt!—I am a fool no doubt. I have always been ashamed of myself. I

suppose there is something very ridiculous about me. I only wish I knew what it was that I might grapple with my enemy. Often and often when walking down the streets have I fancied people were laughing at me. If I see myself in a glass I turn away in disgust, and yet, if I pass a mirror, I cannot help looking into it, nervously—just to see whether I am really as bad as I fancy myself. Thus it is that I have been rallied, times out of number, for being conceited. I try not to be awkward, and immediately feel awkwarder than ever. How I hate having to pass in front of a crowd of people sitting at a flower show or in the park; and yet most probably they never once think of me. Sometimes I have tried to believe that I am only nervous. Ah me! the consolation is a poor one, as anyone who has suffered from nervousness will readily admit.

I am not lively. I am not agreeable. I am not self-possessed. I am no hand at small talk; if I have anything at all to say on a subject, it is because I am in earnest about it, and then I become boring. I am not a lady's man. I could not compliment a woman, and yet mean nothing; neither, however, could I insult her. I could not say the coldly vicious things that I have heard come readily from more than one fine fellow who is adored by the sex. I am a fool in the drawing-room; no doubt of that. I am a stick-in-the-mud, and giggling girls of nineteen can see in me only something to laugh at. But though I can't make pretty speeches, a woman to me is always a woman, never a poor devil to be flouted and scorned. I could not tread on a wretched creature's only dress for the fun of seeing her face of rage and despair, as it is torn out at the gathers. I don't set up to be better than other people, but I could not puff my smoke into the face even of the vilest out-cast in the town. Yet I know a professed lady-killer or two—they are perfect pets in fashionable circles—who can do both these things and be intensely delighted at their own cleverness. And I have seen the unhappy girl try to smile at the outrage, pretending to take it as a joke, and not daring to be insulted. God help some of our poor sisters!

I have no faith in myself. I am supposed to be sullen and proud—Heaven knows why, for I am neither. But I look both. Do I? Quite unintentionally, believe me. Is there a curse upon me? Why am I forced to seem the very thing that I am not? Why, though I know exactly how I ought to behave, am I incapable of carrying a single idea into practice? Why, if I try to be amusing, am I simply ridiculous? Master Harry has the advantage over me *there*. A woman would believe in *him* when—But I have enlarged enough on my own grievances.

I love my Ella literally beyond expression, for when I meet

her I can never muster up wit to utter more than the veriest commonplaces. Can she suspect anything? Surely not. If she imagined I were in love, she could hardly help laughing. But I daresay she only thinks of me as a disagreeable oaf whose room is better than his company. Why can't I please her? Why am I duller and stupider than ever when she is by? If she looks towards me, I drop my eyes and become confused, and mumble unintelligibly.

Why are women such slaves to a man's tongue? Why do they judge of you by the cut of your coat, or the colour of your moustache, or your style of waltzing? Are they blind, and incapable of understanding anything but set forms of speech? Are they utterly regardless of what may be below the surface? Is not the countenance, are not actions, a thousand times more eloquent than words the wittiest and the most cunningly strung together? To ninety-nine women out of a hundred apparently not. To please your mistress, you must begin by shewing a contempt for her understanding. You must almost insult her. You must treat her as a doll, a plaything—a creature of an inferior order. Teaze her, cajole her, flatter her, amuse her, take the least possible pains to win her esteem, act as if you knew her to be a fool and wanted her to see that you thought her one, and in course of time she will come to believe that you are a darling—quite a duck. Approach her with respect and diffidence, and she will think you a bore and a nuisance. She will complain that you are so odd, and so curious, and that she doesn't know what to make of you, and that you are different from other young men.

Yet, after all, the question admits of being reversed. Why, I might ask, are men such slaves to a woman's face? Why do they find an irresistible attraction in her very pertness and folly? A woman, as often as not, reckons the number of her admirers by the depth of her worthlessness.

Now and then I have fancied that Ella—it is a pleasure to me even to write her name—suspects how matters stand. But grant that she does, who would care to marry a bore, who could love a dull clodpated idiot, who has no more spirit than a whipped hound? I would lay down my life to make her happy. Oh, how I wish I could shew her what my feelings really are. How I wish I had the courage—of a certain kind—the assiduity, the brazen armour of self-esteem that some heartless, brainless humbugs possess in abundance. If Harry loved her—I wonder, by-the-bye, whether he could ever love any one except himself—would he go on as I do? No; he would resolve on a certain plan of action. He would follow it up patiently. He



would allow nothing to discourage him, nothing to put him out of conceit with himself. He would watch his opportunity, make a dash of exactly the right kind, at exactly the right moment, and the victory would be won. I know perfectly well that he could cut me out at any moment if he chose. He could not love as I love, but he would have all his wits about him, and the full use of his tongue, where I should be only a laughing stock. I fancy, sometimes, that the more you love the more obstinately does your love refuse the gross form of words. And yet, if you cannot plead your own cause, what chance have you of success? The language of the eyes—a poor language at the best, but especially so in these days when bold self-assertion is everything. Absolutely worthless is it when pitted against the fluent tongue of a man of the world. If Ella had the least suspicion—but I am sure she has none; my face has not betrayed me,—no; depend upon it, my looks are as expressionless as my words. I am stolid all over. Fancy my trying to look languishing. How absurd. Of course, I should resemble nothing so much as a dying duck in a thunderstorm.

Oh, how I wish I could write. How I wish I could paint or compose music! Then I should have some little chance. I should be able to hint, even if I could not speak out plainly. But now—oh, I am an idiot; fellows such as I ought to have more sense than to fall in love. Besides, what would Ella care for the sort of affection I could give her? She is ambitious, she loves society, she is beautiful enough to turn half London mad; what could she do with a husband who would gape, and stutter, and make absurd blunders wherever he went, who dreads ball-rooms and dinner-parties, who is never happy except with his books or when mooning about the streets in a day-dream, who loves quiet and retirement above everything, who has no wish at all to be a celebrity—probably because he knows how hopeless it would be for him to try for success in anything—who is confused and abashed even if stopped out of doors and asked the way to the very place from which he himself has just come, who cannot walk down Rotten Row with comfort, who keeps to all the quietest and least fashionable parts of the Gardens for fear of being jeered at by the nursemaids.

Curse the shyness that always weighs me down and makes me a bore in spite of myself. Why can't I be like other men? Why do I seem in the sulks when I ought to be cheerful? Why do I stammer and grow imbecile and incoherent when all my happiness depends on self-possession and tact?

Surely Satan himself could not have invented a more grievous affliction than *mauvaise honte*!

Ella's guardian seems to guess my feelings, and has spoken once or twice as if inclined to favour my suit. I don't know how it may be in real life, but in novels the parents seem only to care about advancing a match that is utterly hopeless, or likely to result in complete disaster.

The omen is a bad one, but I will disregard it. My consolation shall be that most novels, now-a-days, describe life, not as it is, but as it ought not to be.

I start to-morrow morning by the 11.30 train; I shall reach Culverton by four at the latest.

I can't tell how it is—I feel dreadfully dispirited.

Ah, the rain is beginning to come down again. The pavements are a dark shiny brown already. It looks as if we were to have a run of bad weather.

Is it this that oppresses me? Perhaps so. And yet I feel as if there were something more in the background. Have I any faith in presentiments? I am in the humour to answer "Yes." I feel——But no, it is too absurd.

Well, I don't much care what happens to myself. I am as indifferent concerning Harry as a younger brother usually is respecting the welfare of the elder. But Ella——

Ah, God grant that nothing may be wrong with my darling.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF RICHARD DARLINGTON—*Continued.*

I SUPPOSE I ought to be utterly miserable. Less than twenty-four hours ago I sat in this very chair, scribbling away at this very desk, and if any one had told me what was in store for me, I should have said, "Then as a matter of course I shall go mad, I shall be overwhelmed with despair, or I shall be the subject of a highly effective catastrophe of some sort."

Well the worst has happened and here I am writing, dealing out my nonsense as collectedly and calmly as ever. As calmly? Well perhaps there is a little quickening of the pulse, certainly my lips are dry and cracked, my eyes are hot and painful, and I feel—yes I will honestly own the truth—I feel as if I should never be able to drop off quietly to sleep again. I have all my wits—such as they are—about me; I am not melancholy—indeed I am in a particularly good humour, and rather inclined, though I am sure I do not know why, to be facetious. I suppose, therefore, that I must own for appearance sake, that I am a trifle feverish, but between ourselves I don't believe I was ever in better health, or in a better

humour in my life. I may be a little heated perhaps—nothing more—but I was the least bit in the world excited before I started on my journey; as for my wakefulness, the coffee will account for that; if I am restless—well I have been through a good deal during the last few hours; as for that strange loathing of the very idea of sleep. Peoh, have I not had the same sort of feeling again and again after hearing a new play or a new opera that has interested me deeply. As for my disappointments—they do not deserve to be called such. Even now when I have hardly escaped from the shadow of their bitterness, I am able to recognize them as the best of friends in disguise.

Am I, I wonder, made of tougher material than I supposed? Am I, after all, a man of iron, or a dog with a heart of mud, so mean spirited and selfish a hound that I will put up with any insult rather than be made uncomfortable? A broken heart is all very well in its way, but it entails much in the shape of unpleasantness. There is the romance of the thing, and there are the petty details. A good deal of patient endurance and unreasoning obstinacy is demanded. Grief, nurse it as you will, soon goes off the boil. It is all very well resolving to be faithful for ever and ever to a single idea, but we can't always act up to our determination. The heart when young is elastic—so the moral story books tell us—at first one thing distracts our attention and then another, till by and by we are only too glad to let the old worn-out idol tumble away into forgetfulness. We make up our mind to be utterly miserable from henceforth and for ever, and then one day when we chance to be hungry, we suddenly recollect that we must not eat; or we are inclined to laugh and be merry, and conscience whispers to us that it is our duty to pull a long face and to hide ourselves in decorous sackcloth and ashes. By this time we are in a mood to reconsider the question, and to give a fair hearing to both sides. It is not easy to keep our grief up to the high note of Tragedy after the first month or so. Further than this, it is a curious fact that even at the outset we are often far less pained than we fancied we should be; indeed when common propriety, to speak of no higher motive, suggests tears, we are not seldom in a mood even of indecent merriment. Possibly under the pressure of grief, the mind swerves a little from its balance. We cannot take in a great sorrow, any more than the eye can take in a sudden burst of light in a moment. Perhaps the blow that crushes, numbs at the same time. How else can we explain the fact, that we have sometimes a splendid appetite just before the funeral of our best friend, or that at the solemnest moments we occasionally find ourselves chuckling at some grotesque idea which will recur, again and again, thrust it down as we may?



How we exaggerate the force of a shock in anticipation. It is strange though the utterly thoughtless way in which people speak of the most violent of all shocks—sudden death—as *painless*. What do they mean by the term? By the by, a trite question here occurs to me. What, after all, is Death? I mean the fact, by virtue of which, being in the body one moment, we are thrust into space the next. To such callous folk as those I have in my mind, the parting of body and soul, the abrupt transition from a world of common-places to an eternity of we can't even guess what, the summons to judgment, without a moment left for self-preparation, inspire no more concern than the idea of a trip to Gravesend, or the exchange of an old coat for a new one. Yet what a shock must be here, and a shock of what a kind!

You are rushing across a great trampled-down corn field; bullets are whistling to right and left of you, there is a roaring, tearing, booming noise in your ears, but you are not collected enough to fix your mind on anything in particular, when suddenly—thud. There is bullet through your heart. One gasp, a single leap upwards, and . . . You are rolling along comfortably in a first-class railway carriage, you have finished the evening paper and have thrown it aside into the opposite corner, you are looking out at the window, perhaps deep in consols, or wondering what your wife is going to give you for dinner—crash! . . . Five minutes later a jelly of flesh and blood, a charred morsel or two . . . You are a strong man with all your wits about you, but doomed—whirr! The headsman's knife has dropped, and the multitude, whom it is so difficult to impress, are moving away calmly to their day's work. But you? . . .

Yet again. It is a hot summer morning and you are not quite in your usual spirits. You are writing at your desk, but there is a dull, drowsy feeling about you that you can't get rid of. You keep on making mistakes and are provoked with yourself. You have proceeded thus far in the fair copy of your letter, "My dearest."

The luncheon bell rings, but you do not come down. Annie hurries upstairs to call "Papa." She knocks at the door, but receives no answer. Somehow or another she is frightened, and rushes back into the dining-room full of vague terror and murmurs chokingly, "Oh! mamma, mamma," and nearly bursts out crying. She is trembling all over and there is a wild, hunted look in her eyes, as if a great horrible shadow were close behind her . . . What looks like you, but is not you, reclines with its head resting on the table . . .

Now to compare great things to small. You have plunged from a height into a calmly flowing river. The water was not, as you expected it would be, just warm, but cold to the temperature of ice.

. . . You are a nervous young person, and have a keen recollection of your first shower-bath. Well, just as you pulled the string and the water came down, I daresay the following curious question jerked itself out between your gasps: "I wonder is this anything like death?" Afterwards you may have laughed at the notion as absurd, but still it had occurred to you, and forcibly for all that.

A header into the Thames, a bucketful of water let down at the jerk of a cord, are neither of them very unusual occurrences, or on the face of them very awful; but an unexpected shock, from whatever cause it may arise, is always severe, and it is usually suggestive. The soul seemed lifted half out of you and dropped back again. You said to yourself, "When the spirit bursts from the flesh altogether?" But at this point speculation came to a standstill. To reason was out of the question, you might, if so inclined, dream idly; you could do no more.

But after all—to continue the subject a little further—is the connection between a shock of the above sort, and the last great shock of all, anything but the merest dream? Is the latter the former intensified or something altogether different in kind? Grant that the actual severance of body and soul, be merely the division of an imperceptible thread; if so, how can any pain be involved? Is death itself a pang, or is there only the suffering that comes immediately before that strange something by which mind and matter are made separate till the end of time?

But this indefinable something in question; is it possible that it can be felt, or is it as imperceptible to our senses as the act of falling asleep? Can it ever approach except so gradually that when it strikes the mind has already become wrapt in the atmosphere of a new state of being, and can cross the narrow stream dividing the two worlds without horror or surprise, having a clear if not a wide view of the strange country on the other side? True, *we* may talk of sudden death. Body and soul may seem to us separated in a mere lightning flash, but as in dreams the events of years are crowded into minutes, so to the sufferer the experience of ages may be compressed into the gleam and whirr of the executioner's knife.

Yet another question. What if there be, so to speak, an infancy beyond the grave? What if even after the indisputable severance of body and mind there always be a *gradual awakening* of the soul and never a sudden appreciation of that which is beyond human comprehension, and, as it seems, incapable of being realized on the instant? What if the full knowledge of the glories of another world be imparted to us by slow degrees as is the true perception of objects to a man blind from his birth, and whose sight is the result of an operation?

Here I stop, having wandered on far beyond my depth, perhaps having strayed on to ground where I am an intruder. But to-night I am strangely excited ; my mind is morbidly restless ; it is stirred to its depths—dregs rather—though it is calm enough on the surface. My pen and my feverish brain drag me on whither I would not.

Let me see. A short while ago I assured myself that I was as cool and collected as ever I had been. I honestly grant that I am not so now. I am not tired ; I am not sleepy ; I am not depressed in spirits, but I am in that exhausting steady glow of excitement that in certain constitutions follows the free use of opium.

A short anecdote and I have done. It is a dream that I have to record, and I insert it here because, however trivial it may be in itself, it has a fantastic bearing on the subject I have discussed.

A year or two ago I used to dream night after night that I was being led up the steps of the scaffold to the guillotine. I saw the crowd looking on with that beast-like apathy and stupid curiosity peculiar to lethargic minds. I saw the houses a little way off and the trees rising above them, and I experienced a strange sensation when I reflected that in another moment or two for me there would be trees and houses no longer. I saw the blue sky and the sunshine glittering on the bright green leaves, and forgetting my situation I had a momentary pleasure in the beauty of the day. I was not frightened, I was not exactly resigned, but my faculties were half numbed. When a signal was made for me to kneel down, my faith, hitherto strong, failed me just a little. What if in fact all that I had been told and had learnt to believe without any particular effort of reason, should turn out an ingenious fable ? What if after the fall of the axe there should be the blackness of darkness—simple annihilation—for ever ? I turned and saw my guards, grim, stolid, matter-of-fact. Somehow the sight of material objects reassured me. I felt that I could meet death—not without a pang of regret at being called away when still so young and while so many sources of enjoyment were yet open to me—but certainly without flinching. I looked up at the knife gleaming overhead, and was surprised to find the whole machine so like what I had expected it would be. I glanced down at the straw and sawdust with which the blood-stained boards were littered, and now I noticed for the first time that there was a strange smell in the air as of raw meat, which caused me to shudder and sicken, and reminded me that others had been executed before me, and that still more victims were to come.

At a sign I dropped on my knees. I felt that I was securely bound, that escape was out of the question. I heard the knife grate overhead ———



Of course at the critical moment I always awoke with a start. At least, I always awoke for a time; but the curious part of my story remained to be told. At last a night came when the axe really descended—*when I did not awake*.

I was dead. Body and soul had parted. I was a mere essence. I had all my faculties. I could see, hear, and reason, but I could not feel and I could not be touched. I was no longer embarrassed by the flesh. My worn-out clothes, so to speak, were laid aside. I existed, but I was without form, impalpable, invisible. I looked down, but in doing so I moved no part of any substance belonging to me, for to look upwards or downwards, to be here or to move elsewhere, appeared a mere matter of will unencumbered by effort. What men call matter was to me no obstacle at all. I could pierce walls, I could float in the air, I could ascend to the loftiest heights, I could dive into depths unfathomable, I could remain an amused listener at the shoulders of those who fancied me dead; I could gaze into their faces, listen to all that they were saying, and be conscious even of what was passing in their minds, without hindrance, without exertion of any sort. Conceive, if you can, the better part of man freed from all that impedes the full exercise of its divinest faculties, and you will have some notion of my state after the descent of the knife.

To return. I looked downwards. My body was being removed. The head lay severed from the trunk, and between the two parts spread a widening pool of dark crimson blood. The crowd was moving away. I felt *perfectly* happy, tranquil beyond expression. I was thrilled. I cannot describe my sensations except by the use of clumsy and illogical phrases. I reflected that to see all, to know all, to grasp the hitherto unattainable was now within my power. I plumed my wings, as it were, for a still higher flight. I was drawn to a centre of attraction from which all that was grand, absorbing, and blissful seemed to radiate. I lifted my gaze—I awoke. . . . .

But what I wish to dwell upon is this: in spite of the tremendous crash of the knife, in spite of the sudden parting of body and soul, in spite of severed arteries and broken bone, in spite of the awful impulse by which the spirit was flung whirling into eternity, I felt absolutely nothing at all. I was conscious of no change, at least until I began to reflect. I was dead without knowing that I was dead. I had no longer flesh and blood, but, to use a figure, it was my dress that I had left behind me, not my individuality.

Here is my dream,—a nut for the curious in speculation; crack it who can. Being simply a dream, of course it carries no argument. But at least it is suggestive.

Yet a word more.

I have related facts. I have recorded nothing that I cannot distinctly remember. I have not drawn on my imagination even for details.

\* \* \* \* \*

Good heavens! To-night, too, of all times. The blow has fallen, and my consolation is to sit here spinning out twaddle by the yard. So much for the man of refinement, of acute sensibilities, of ardent passions. A worm may turn, but not he. Well, it is prudent if not creditable, this frank recognition of the *fait accompli*.

I am no more inclined for sleep than I was a couple of hours ago. I feel as if I could go on scribbling for ever. I have no thoughts of a publisher, so I can waste pens, ink, paper, and time without a scruple of conscience.

It is folly putting the light out. I could not sleep if I tried. Let the clock run itself down.

Death, dreams, shocks. Yes, the last was the starting point.

No, let the great pang of all be what it may, the sense of others is "most in apprehension." We don't know our own strength till it is tried. Or had I not better say, the intensity of our own selfishness? No, that would be cynical, and cynicism in a young man of my age is ludicrous. Your *blasé* Don Juans of five-and-twenty, your Diogeneses who have just come of age, your languid Templars who fancy that they have probed the weaknesses of society, to whom "everything is nought, and nought is everything," who have not yet succeeded in forming "a connexion," who have plenty of idle time on their hands, and whose thoughts, consequently, stagnate and rot,—these men are scathing censors in their own estimation, a trifle boring to those of their own standing, and merely a curious phase of the period to such as are old enough not to be obliged to feel ashamed of enjoying the sweets of the world, whose palates are too seasoned to be unduly irritated by its bitters.

However, when we come to compare the fruit with the promise, we can seldom help feeling mortified. What great strong men we are in our own estimation, and what pigmies we turn out to be in fact. We don't know the depth or the shallowness of our own minds till circumstances apply the test, often to our own shame and disgust, and how faintly is the future that we picture to ourselves realized in the future that actually comes.

By-the-bye, though, I had better take care; I am wandering off into the region of platitudes.

Should the light of my eyes and the pride of my heart, say you, be taken away, I should go mad, I should quarrel with Pro-

vidence, I *could* not be resigned. I should never afterwards be myself; it would be impossible to recover the blow. Be not deceived. To say that in another twelvemonth you would be quarrelling with your cook because a certain mutton-cutlet had fallen short of perfection, might seem a cruel exaggeration, but the bolt will fall, all that you dread most will come to pass, and then you will be astonished—for a time at least—at your own impassiveness.

You will not scream, or dash yourself on the ground, or tear your hair. Oh, dear no, you will be collected and particularly anxious to preserve appearances. You will simply pull the blinds down. You will not commit suicide; you will give certain orders to your servant, and expect to have them obeyed. I should hardly be surprised if you were not to shed a tear. You will be yourself, and more than yourself. You will acquire a sudden and strange interest in matters absurdly insignificant. You will not be frantic, but you will count the number of knots in the two upper panels of your door, and with an unaccountable regard for things of no importance you will reckon them up again to make sure that you have been right. You will be composed, not by religion, but by some strange property that the mind develops in moments of great affliction. Without fully comprehending anything beyond the immediate present, you will speak in tones not even tremulous but actually firm and decisive. Your thoughts will be abnormally active, but in the most strange and unusual directions. Sometimes you will forget your sorrows altogether, and at the bidding of a sudden idea you will rise up to consult the departed. Indeed, but for an occasional sharp pang or two, you would be well enough in every respect, being annoyed, however, by a feeling in your throat as if you were suffocating, and a hardness and heat of the eyes as if they would burst from your head.

At the bidding of Necessity, a stern taskmistress who will take no refusal, and who sets sentimental fancies at defiance, you will presently begin to eat, drink, and sleep—only a little, to be sure—but still you will take refreshment of some sort, and you will lie down and dream, probably in a confused, incoherent way, about matters of no importance. You will be surprised and rather ashamed of yourself, and perhaps you will wish for death, and even pray for it, but death will not come.

Here, again, we must take note of a humiliating little circumstance likely to occur, even though you should have resolved on self-murder or a life of stern asceticism. Some one will suggest that certain purchases are needed, and with dry eyes and a composed countenance you will rise up and set about your business.



You will go into mourning, not because you think it right in the abstract that you should do so, but at the bidding of Mrs. Grundy. You will actually prefer the tasteful to the more appropriately hideous; you will have some regard even for fashion; you will by no means feel disposed to scatter your money at random. Ah, stern resolves!—ah, tragic resolutions!—how do you fall to the ground when confronted by that prim dame Propriety. To think that instead of locking yourself up with your grief and refusing comfort as an insult, you should go out, after having brushed your coat and drawn on your gloves, on a paltry shopping expedition, and perhaps that in even less than a twelve-month you should be so lost to that once-all-engrossing idea as to be entertaining serious thoughts of a dinner-party.

It is about one man in a thousand who really acts up to his purpose, who flies the world, rejects its blandishments with scorn, and, setting comfort at defiance, drags out the rest of his days in tormenting fidelity to one all-absorbing idea. You may fancy yourself a model of constancy. You may sincerely believe that after such or such a shock the world will have charms for you no longer; but there are hearts, aye, loving and faithful ones, in which grief cannot be made to take root, nourish the unwholesome plant as you may, in which, whether from frivolity or want of imagination, sorrow begins after a time to wither and fade out of remembrance, leaving you ashamed of your own inconstancy, and with a pretty fair, if rather a despicable relish for the vanities and trifles, and—alas, that it must be said—even mere animal enjoyments that pleased your unregenerate taste in the days of yore.

Can I sleep now, I wonder? I am getting bewildered. My pen staggers and splutters in the most disreputable manner. I can't keep my mind to any one subject. Strange confused ideas come trooping up one after the other. I seem to hear people talking behind my back. I seem to hear music, and now the murmur of a crowd. Daylight is beginning to peep in timidly. I hear a cart rumbling in the distance. Somebody is moving below.

Listen to the birds; one leads off in song, and all the rest follow. What a twittering of voices up in those smoky old trees. Oh, little birds, how I wish I could fly away as you do, and fly, and fly, and fly till I was tired out, and dropped down dead. What a fool I am, and the idea is a very, very old one, only badly expressed. I am all of a shiver. My head aches. I am not sleepy. I wish—now—there—instantly—ah, I must give it up, pen and brain have both mutinied. I am tired out.

## KING JAMES'S VOLUNTEERS.

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IN days of "breech-loaders," "long ranges," "running stags," and other necessities of modern rifle competition, it may not be without interest to learn how volunteer gatherings were managed a couple of hundred years ago. There is little need, as good luck will have it, to draw upon imagination for such materials as we want. A faithful and masterly hand of the period has bequeathed a sketch which in minuteness of detail no less than in freedom of drawing proclaims the instinct of the true artist enamoured with his work. Or, to drop all figure, the calendar of quaint old Adams, under date 1616, gives an account of a shooting-match between the cities of Bristol and Exeter, at which the chronicler himself was present, and which may be regarded, if not actually as the parent, as at least a respected ancestor of nineteenth century rifle-contests. What follows is merely an enlarged photograph of the original picture.

It is early summer, and the shopkeepers of Bristol and Exeter are forgetting market prices in their hot eagerness to make out a list of their keenest marksmen. Each city is fairly on its mettle, and means to do its best, for the martial renown of its town-folk hangs upon a musketry contest that is soon to be shot off. Preliminaries have been duly settled, and the Bristol men are to ride to Exeter to meet the Devonshire people on their own ground. Fifteen well-proved muskets—the Sniders and Whitworths of the period—have been carefully packed in cases for conveyance on horseback, and when the morning of the 27th of May arrives the marksmen themselves appear, fresh as the cowslips in the city meadows, but whether in plain clothes or uniform is not distinctly said. But whichever way it was, there must have been some desire to rival military accoutrements, since it is related that every man's "bandolere"—the belt, that is, which passes over the shoulder and supports the cartouche-box—was "covered with velvet, silver lace, and silver fringe, which cost them fifty shillings a-piece." It is curious to note in passing that then, as now, silver lace seems to have been the mark of volunteers as distinguished from the gold lace of the regulars. All the city was astir to see them off. So intense was the anxiety felt about the issue of the contest that the sheriff himself did not think it beneath his dignity to ride

forth with some two score of the leading merchants to bring the marksmen well upon their journey. Horses must have been sturdy and riders must have been used to the saddle, for the rough roads of the west country—knee-deep with cart-ruts, and overhung with hedges that almost shut out the light—were passed without mishap to man or beast. A night's rest at Taunton sent them all bravely on their way, and by the afternoon of the day which followed their departure from home the towers of Exeter Cathedral were well in sight. The "ever faithful city" had been long afoot, and had gone out some miles upon the road to meet them, and so with trumpets blowing, drums beating, flags flying, and caps waving the procession made its way down High Street straight to the Guildhall, where Mayor and Aldermen were waiting to receive the comers, and to announce that supper was ready.

Early next morning the Bristol men were out in the meadows by the side of the Exe, trying their pieces and getting their eye accustomed to the features of the place. Their practice was all that could be desired. Neither hand nor weapon had suffered from a two days' jolting in the saddle. If they could only shoot like that to-morrow the Devonshire men would have to look to their own. Their spirits, therefore, rose to the highest pitch of confidence as they went back to their quarters for breakfast.

But secret as they had supposed their morning's operations to have been, they had not escaped the eye of that most sleepless of all pestilent things that crawl—the sporting "tout." Every shot had been duly registered, and the result of the firing had been carried up to the captain of the Devon marksmen. A glance at the score was enough to show that things were looking bad. If this was the "form" of the Bristol men a few hours after they had been jolted over roads which were rough enough to dislocate every joint, what might be expected of them when another night's sound rest had perfectly restored their steadiness of nerve and eye? The prospect was not encouraging, but strong drink and late hours might do something. The trial, at all events, was worth making when the honour of the city was at stake. And so thought the sheriff when the Exeter captain had disclosed his woes, for he instantly sent down a message to the Bristol men, begging them to do him the honour of supping at his house that evening to meet some county gentlemen who had ridden in to attend the next day's contest.

Now whether it was that the Bristol men felt that under all the circumstances the sheriff's invitation could not be declined without affront,—or whether an inordinate craving for beef and brandy made them regardless of the chances of to-morrow,—or whether the accounts that they had received of the Exeter men's



practice had made them over-confident in their own success—cannot be said for certain. All those causes, possibly, may have moved them to present themselves at the sheriff's house by the hour appointed. If they had calculated upon meeting their rivals of next day, they must have been considerably amazed to find that not one of them was there. Their host muttered something about his inability to entertain both sides at once, and went on to say, with many smiles and bows, that the Exeter marksmen could be feasted at any time, but that it did not often fall to his fortune to welcome so distinguished a company as that which was now gracing his table—with more to like effect. Satisfied with these protestations the party fell to, and as the squires that had ridden in to see the shooting turned out to be not only men of long descent but of unimpeachable capacity for meat and drink as well, the feasting was prolonged till far into the night. Who shall venture to record a list of toasts, loyal, patriotic, social and amatory proposed by those sturdy Devon toppers, and as duly honoured by the flushed and excited Bristol champions, who felt no little delight at finding themselves in such distinguished company! It seemed as if bumpers would never come to an end, when one of the marksmen, a trifle steadier than his comrades, suggested a retreat towards bed. Brandy and tobacco had not so completely clouded their brains but they could see visions of shooting butts looming only a few hours off. So the band was got together, and with many last cups and profuse hand-shaking began to stagger towards their lodging as best they might. But the idea of their setting out alone was more than the exuberant hospitality of the Devonshire squires could bear. Out the company turns as one man, and down the street reel sheriff and squires, arm-in-arm with their Bristol guests, waking half of Exeter with wild snatches of drunken chorus. The quarters of the Bristol men are reached at last, and their escort is turning to depart, when some thirsty soul suggests burnt sack. The word flies through the revellers like wild-fire. Again and again are the tankards renewed, and not till long after sunlight has looked through the windows of the hostelry have the Bristol musketeers sunk down to snatch a few hours of feverish sleep.

Repentance seems to have come with their first waking thoughts. Flushed faces and unsteady hands shewed how idle it would be to meet even the most bungling of marksmen who had gone to bed and slept like decent men. They would only be hooted off the ground. And what would Bristol say when the cause of their discomfiture became known? Better to give up the shooting altogether than incur the certainty of a shameful beating. Yes, they would make off as fast as possible, and perhaps the people at home

might be inclined to receive them with pity when they heard that Exeter had abused the laws of hospitality to bring them to this dismal plight. So it was resolved to order out their horses and start at once for Bristol. It seemed the only thing to do, and they whose headaches allowed them to join in the deliberation agreed that the sooner it were done the better.

But the men of Devonshire were not to be put off so easily. They saw a victory which they would not cast away for nothing. So, long before the horses are saddled, the inn-yard is full of an excited crowd demanding to know the reason of such haste.

"What! ride without shooting!" cry the Exeter marksmen, who have now come up under the pretence of escorting their rivals to the targets, "was ever such a thing heard of!"

"Heard of, or not heard of, we mean to go," was the stolid reply as girths were tightened and baggage strapped on.

"Cowards! cowards!" shrieked the crowd, which by this time was blocking up the street. "Listen to the poltroons who are afraid to shoot fair, and want to turn tail."

And then they began to talk of a ducking in the Exe as the fittest thing to cool the heads of men who chose to get drunk over-night, for the purpose of spoiling good sport in the morning.

The aspect of the city was threatening, and crowds of countrymen, who were hurrying in to see the contest of musketry, did not make the chances of peaceful escape more promising. There was little hope of the Devon men foregoing their victory or their fun either. The best thing, then, to be done—so the woe-begone champions of Bristol confessed at last—was to order in breakfast, and then go down to the shooting-fields and try their luck. All things considered, they do not seem to have come off so badly—let our chronicler himself tell the result. "Our men" (the Bristolians) he says, "were best and second at the mark; yet by reason of one bullet from Exeter struck but the edge of the target more than was done on our side, it was judged thereby that they won two rounds, and our men one, whereby they lost a hundred nobles (the noble being equal to 6s. 8d.), which otherwise they had won so much." In spite of the growl about the bullet which "struck but the edge of the target," everything seems to have been fair and above-board. The Bristolians had nothing to complain of, except the profuseness of the sheriff's hospitality. And so old Adams is constrained to admit, when he adds, "no man was suffered to spend one penny for diet, wine, beer, or provender." Lest it should be supposed that the champions of his city were smarting more under the loss of the prize than of honour, he somewhat magniloquently finishes, "Besides this small loss, our men showed themselves valorous and bountiful. They gave away

about £100 in Exeter, among officers and poor people of the city; for every man that rode thither put £5 a piece into a common purse."

This was at the end of May, and before the beaten marksmen set out for home, it was arranged that a return match should be shot off on the 1st of July next ensuing, and that the Exonians should ride to Bristol for the purpose. The blood of both cities was up, and nothing was to be spared that could render the contest imposing. Bristol too had to win back its laurels as well as to exercise hospitality, and it was resolved that no effort should be wanting to deserve success. The Exeter men set out in great strength—fifty-five horsemen in all, including many gentlemen of distinction, as well as the picked body of musketeers. The squires were of opinion, no doubt, that there might be occasion to sustain the honour of their county at the supper-table, and were fully prepared to test the strength of Bristol brains in sack, or ale, or brandy, or any liquor that was ever brewed. Their hosts were ready to receive them, having ridden out four good miles and more to bring them in with noisy welcome. What between braying of trumpets, jingling of arms, beating of drums, clashing of church-bells, and roaring of a holiday crowd—the like of which had seldom been seen before—the new arrivals were pretty nearly deafened by the time that they dismounted in the court-yard of the Bear, where free quarters had been provided for their reception. Warned, no doubt, by the misadventure at Exeter, the champions of both sides seem to have postponed the pleasures of the table till the more serious business of the meeting had been brought to a close. No hint at all events appears of noisy toasts, or roistering walks at night. But none the less were both sides inclined to wrangle. The Exonians were captious and hard to please—so hard, indeed, that a clear day was lost before they could make up their minds about the shooting-ground. The Marsh they would not hear of, though the butt had been erected and the tents prepared. The knowing-ones laughed and said that Marsh or no Marsh, it was all the same, since they were only looking out for a pretext not to shoot at all. Let them have their own way—they went on to advise—let them shoot where and how they pleased, otherwise there would be small chance of seeing any sport. A place at last was hit upon, and, to the delight of everyone, a fresh butt was set up. What followed is so admirably told by our chronicler, that it is a pity not to give his very words. "Thursday afternoon our men (the Bristolians), in number eighteen, prepared themselves, being led by three worthy captains with three ensigns and six drums, came to the door of their lodging: the sight whereof so daunted their adversaries, that they fell to jangling between them-



selves, insomuch that though before they seemed all ready, they durst not come forth, but strived to put one the other foremost."

It certainly does seem a little undignified to see the picked men of Exeter elbowing one another towards the door, like a roomful of shy and ill-mannered school-girls. Let us hope that this is not the kind of thing that finds favour now-a-days among the Volunteers of "the ever faithful city."

When the Bristolians discovered that no amount of cheering or drum-beating could draw their adversaries from their quarters, they wheeled round and marched to the place appointed for the shooting, attended by the mayor and council and an immense posse of knights and gentlemen. Two hours passed, and still no sign of the Exonians. Moved at last by the fear of ridicule no less than by the thought of unpleasant consequences that would await them on their return, they plucked up heart of grace and marched down to the ground with as much composure as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to have kept all Bristol dancing attendance upon their pleasure for half the day.

As far as any good that came of their shooting, the timorous Exonians might just as well have stayed beneath the shelter of the Bear. The wind, it should be mentioned, was blowing a gale from the south-west, and that, no doubt, was the reason why even the Bristolians could put seven only out of fifty-two shots into the target, while the Exonians could score no more than five hits out of the same number of rounds. Darkness came on before the match had been decided, so it was arranged that four of each side were to fire one shot apiece next morning. The day was perfectly fine and still, and the result of the firing is thus told: "Three of our men (the Bristolians) shot into the target and the fourth one inch over; and never a one of their four shots came within half a foot of the target. So our men were best, second, and third, won the three rounds, and £100 in money, besides much bets won on our side, all which," adds the chronicler, "was spent upon them, and a hundred pounds to double repay their courtesy."

But this was not all. Every penny that had been laid out by the Exonians in coming and going, as well as everything that had been spent by them in the city was returned, and that no excuse might be made to mulct them on the score of charity, it was strictly forbidden to any institution to receive a farthing by way of alms. They were a polite and open-handed race, those marksmen of a couple of hundred years ago. Long live their memory!

No wonder that with such examples before them a west country regiment should stand first on the levy of modern volunteers.

## M I D N I G H T.

ALL hail! thou dark-browed and majestic Queen!  
 I watch thy coming with awe-bated breath.  
 Thy beauty is a terror! and thy mien  
 Is as the mien of Death!

And yet I love thee, Midnight, with such love  
 As steeps my spirit in a dread delight!  
 A trembling pleasure thrills me as you move  
 Dark-splendid in my sight!

I worship, whilst I wonder at the glow  
 Which shines within thy deep and awful eyes:  
 I joy to see thy star-gem'd tresses flow  
 Across the dusky skies!

I fain would clasp thee to my yearning breast,  
 Yet fear thy bosom's cold and clammy touch:  
 With one wild kiss I'd ease my heart's unrest,  
 But dread thy lips too much!

A vague strange passion stirs my inmost soul—  
 My whole frame tingles when I feel thee near,  
 And o'er my heart's mysterious surgings roll  
 Tremors of joy and fear!

I marvel, is such beauty, lone and rich,  
 Devoid of being, and the spirit's gleam?  
 Or knows it not some truer life, of which  
 Our gross minds may not dream?

But never falls the answer,—and perforce,  
 I stand and watch and wonder from afar,  
 To see thee sweep on thy majestic course  
 To meet the Morning Star!

BY THE LATE WILLIAM LEIGHTON.

## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### CAPTAIN LUMLEY IS PAINFULLY SURPRISED.

"HULLO!" cried Policeman X, as he stumbled across the prostrate figure of the baronet half-an-hour after the latter had closed the door of his house behind him, "what's hup now? Gent as 'as had too much I suppose!" And the gallant guardian of the night stooped down to look into the face of the man who was huddled up against the lintel of the door.

There was something in that face which roused even the torpid faculties of Policeman X. He knew Sir George Lumley instantly, recognizing him despite the fact that his face was drawn on one side in ghastly disfigurement. He whistled softly to himself, as it was his wont to do when he was unusually perturbed or excited, and stood for a moment considering what to do next. Then it occurred to him that the baronet's proper place under such circumstances was in his own home; and so he rang loudly at the bell. It seemed a long time ere the summons was responded to; but at last hurried footsteps were heard in the hall, and the door was opened.

Then they bore the master of the household back to his own chamber, carrying him, as even rough men-servants can do at such a time, with the tenderness of women, and laying him on the bed which he had not occupied during the night. The doctor, who was summoned and who came instantly, shook his head when he had examined the patient. "Paralysis; very bad case," was all that he said. They roused Gerald from the sound, fresh sleep of youth, to bring him to the chamber where his father lay insensible; they summoned Arthur Lumley, too, to bear watch with his cousin, and they sent far and wide to famous doctors, to call them to the sick-room.

It was all in vain—the rich man was death-struck. He had gone through not a little in his life. Despite his rank and his wealth, he had known better than most men what it was to have Black Care seated beside him; and at last he had sunk beneath the weight. Saved from a shameful death by his own act, he had only been saved to die by the hand of God.



For hours he lay moaning and insensible ; and during all these hours he was watched over by Gerald, by Arthur, and by Harcourt. The latter had reached the house in the early morning, and had received the note that had been found upon the baronet's table addressed to him, which he had read and immediately destroyed.

At no time during that dreadful day, when the very servants trod softly and spoke in whispers, as though conscious of the royal presence of Death, was there any hope of Sir George's recovery. Each physician who was brought to his bedside only turned from it with the same dread conviction written on his face. But towards evening the dying man grew easier, and then they induced Gerald to leave the room for a time in order to partake of some refreshment.

The poor lad loved his father deeply and tenderly : and, like all who for the first time are brought face to face with death, he was utterly unable to realize the dreadful truth that he was about to be separated from him. He was told that there was no hope ; and he heard those around him speaking of the end which was so near ; but though he appeared to acquiesce in all they said, it seemed to him that he was only playing a part in some ghastly charade. That the shadow which was deepening on the house was a real one, he could not for a moment believe.

It was Arthur who led him out of the room where the sick man lay, and who tried to make him eat and drink ere he returned to his watch. Arthur's voice had never been softer, his manner had never been more tender than now ; and yet both seemed to irritate his cousin, who refused to hear him speak of his father's illness, and almost churlishly rejected his attempts at consolation.

Captain Lumley was accustomed to his cousin's temper, and had always made every possible allowance for it. But never had he shown such determination not to be irritated or annoyed by the lad's manner as on the present occasion. The more the latter repulsed him, the more winning was the smile with which he sought to propitiate him, the more tenderly solicitous the manner he adopted towards him. Was it the thought of the bereavement which Gerald was about to sustain which led him to take this course, or was it some less worthy motive ? Who shall say ?

They had not been long absent from the bedroom, but they had been long enough to miss the last scene. The old butler, entering the room where they were seated, brought the last sad news.

"How is my father?" cried Gerald, as he entered.

"He has passed away, sir," was the response.

"My poor, dear cousin," said the Captain, seizing Gerald's hand and pressing it warmly. "You must bear up now; you really must. Remember the great position to which your father's death has called you, and the great responsibilities which have suddenly been cast upon you. You are Sir Gerald Lumley now."

If Gerald had been more master of himself than he was, he would undoubtedly have resented this allusion at such a moment. But he had no words with which to reply to his cousin. He was sick, stunned, unable to grasp the truth; and the old servant led him away as though he were a child, and literally compelling him to go to bed, sat down to watch beside him, weeping.

Where was Charles Harcourt at this time? Grievously discomposed, he was wandering through some of the smaller streets of Mayfair, endeavouring to collect his thoughts and make up his mind as to what step he must take. Much as his heart bled for the friend of his youth, it bled still more for the lad who in a single day had lost everything—father, fortune, and even name. How was he to break the terrible tidings to the boy? He had looked forward to this day with dread for years, and again and again he had endeavoured to induce Sir George Lumley to do something to prepare his son's mind for the terrible revelation which must one day be made to him regarding his birth. But all his efforts had, as the reader knows, been in vain; and at last the day had come suddenly upon him, bringing with it an accumulation of disasters such as no one had dreamt of anticipating.

For of the total wreck of the Grand Alliance Discount Company there could now be no manner of doubt. The stately ship which, two days before, had appeared as a very Great Eastern amongst the smaller craft of companies, was now a hopeless wreck. The directors, of course, after the manner of their kind, were brazening out the disaster, and had issued that usual notification as to "temporary and unforeseen difficulties," which invariably precedes the curt intimation of total ruin. But no one in the city, and hardly anyone out of it, was deceived by this poor and specious pretext; and in thousands of homes on that summer day on which Sir George Lumley of Lumley laid down the weary load of life, there was gloom and anguish, the shadow of despair, and in some cases of death.

As Harcourt, thinking of these things and of the terrible duty which lay before him, paced thoughtfully under the dead wall of Chesterfield House, Lord Cleverly, who was walking according to his wont as fast as a slight touch of the gout would permit him in the direction of the House of Lords, made his appearance. Cleverly was a diplomatist, but it did not require

any special proficiency in Talleyrand's noble art to enable him to perceive that there was something wrong with his friend.

"Why are you not in the House, Harcourt? I saw two or three questions on the paper for you. Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Yes: there is something wrong, Cleverly. I've just left Lumley's."

"Ah! I understand. Dreadful business that. Why, they say that poor Lumley has invested a quarter of million in those Grand Alliance shares. He'll be ruined. Is it not an infernal shame?"

"It's worse than ruin in his case, Cleverly. It's death. Sir George died half-an-hour ago."

"Good God! Harcourt! You don't mean to say that. Why, I met him at your house last night. Poor fellow!" and the good-humoured face of the peer assumed that expression of solemnity which covers faces even in Mayfair and Belgravia when they are brought close to the last great reality of life.

"Yes; Cleverly: my poor friend is gone. He got wind of this rascally business last night, went home, had a stroke, and died, as I said, half-an-hour ago."

"Upon my word, Harcourt, you men who are 'in'—Cleverly was one of the "outs"—"ought to do something to put a stop to this kind of swindling. Why it's murder, nothing less; and every one of those blackguards ought to be hanged. I'd hang 'em if I were Home Secretary. See if I wouldn't," said Cleverly, shaking his fist across the street in his energy, and, thereby, inspiring terror in the bosom of a laundress who was at the moment pursuing the even tenour of her way on the other side of the road.

"Look here, Cleverly," said Harcourt, who had been making up his mind, whilst the other had been speaking, and who felt that the time had come when he might safely seek some advice as to the best mode of performing the heavy task which lay before him: "This affair is far worse than you have any idea of. You will feel that it must be so when I tell you that, though Lumley and I have been close friends since we were boys, his death is the least dreadful part of the business. It's an affair I can hardly bring my mind to talk about; but it will soon be all over London, and there are not many men whose help I would sooner ask for than yours. That boy—"

"You mean Gerald?" interposed Cleverly.

Harcourt nodded, and continued: "That boy knows that his father is dead; but he does not know what I've now got to tell him, and that is that he is illegitimate and penniless."

I have said that Lord Cleverly's face had grown very solemn and serious when he heard of Sir George Lumley's death; but no



words can convey the expression of amazement and dismay which now settled upon it. Fathers must die. Cleverly had lost his father, and had survived a loss which had given him a handsome estate and a seat in the House of Lords: therefore, though he was naturally shocked to hear of the sudden death of his friend, he had quietly accepted it as one of the things which are inevitable. But what was a bereavement such as Gerald Lumley had sustained, compared with the awful possibility at which Harcourt had now hinted! To lose not only a father, but a name, a position in society, and a splendid estate: it was something which Lord Cleverly could not grasp.

Harcourt caught the bewildered look of the other, and told the story, as he was accustomed to tell everything, simply and clearly; concluding by asking his advice as to the first step which ought to be taken in breaking the news to Gerald.

Cleverly swore some round oaths by way of giving forcible expression to his sympathy for the lad: and let us hope that the recording angel refused to register them, for the peer's sympathy was expressed in spite of the fact that he had always entertained a very sincere and by no means unfounded aversion to "the Lumley cub."

"Now, Harcourt!" he said, when he had thus relieved his mind; "don't do anything in a hurry. Don't you think, to begin with, that something might be done with that other fellow—the cousin? He's a very fine sort of fellow. I like him immensely; and I think if he were offered a round sum to get out of the way he would go, and say no more about it. You know it's been a mere accident, and it's always better to hush up these scandals, if you can."

"Captain Lumley is a very pleasant man; but I don't think he would be inclined to sell his birthright—for it is his birthright, you know, Cleverly."

"Well, but, try him, Harcourt. It's a dreadful business—upon my word I never heard of anything worse of the kind; but still it may be compromised, and a compromise is always best either in politics or anything else."

"I'm afraid it wouldn't do in this case. You see, even if we could buy off the Captain, and, for my part, I should hardly like to propose such a thing to him, we would never know where we were, or when we were safe. He might marry and have children, and the whole affair might crop up at a worse moment even than the present. I'm afraid there is no help for it."

They were crossing the Green Park as Harcourt uttered these words, for they had continued to walk in the direction of Westminster. Suddenly, Cleverly turned round with a bright ex-

pression on his face, and, grasping his friend's arm, stopped him whilst he said :

"Harcourt, you say that the first Lady Lumley left Sir George a few months after her marriage, and lived for several years after that. Do you think there is any chance that she had a child?"

"I've thought of that; and I'm afraid there isn't any chance that such a thing happened. I know that Lumley made inquiries at the time, and that he at last was satisfied that nothing of the sort had taken place. There is one fellow, though, who, I believe, knows all about it. That's an old man called Dawson, who is Lumley's chief bailiff in Midlandshire, and who was the uncle of his first wife."

"You must get hold of that man and pump him. What sort of fellow is he?"

"I've not seen him for nearly twenty years, and I never exchanged more than a couple of sentences with him in my life, but my profound conviction is that he is as great a rogue as you could wish to meet with. That's a first impression, you know, Cleverly, though it is twenty years old: so you must just take it for what it may be worth."

"H'm," murmured the peer meditatively, "it's an awkward mess altogether; but be sure and see the Captain first, and try whether he's inclined to be generous."

"I shall," said Harcourt; and then the two men parted, Cleverly continuing on his way to the House, and the other returning to Park Lane in order to fulfil his task.

It was a trying moment even for the great statesman as he sat in the library awaiting the appearance of Arthur, for whom he had sent. He looked round at the gaunt book-cases filled with volumes which had never been opened, for Sir George had not been a reading man, and he studied the features of his dead friend's face as they were preserved in the marble bust which occupied the space between the two windows of the apartment. The letters received that morning for the baronet lay unopened on a writing-table; there, too, were the newspapers of the day waiting for the eye which would never more light upon them. It was the thought, the unutterable thought, of the irretrievableness of death which was brought home to him by these trifles which at last overwhelmed him. He fairly sobbed aloud, and he was feeling as nearly hysterical as a strong man can do when Arthur entered the room.

The young man's face wore a subdued and softened expression that suited it wonderfully well. There was no smile upon it as his eye met Harcourt's, but instead there was a mute flash of sympathy which seemed to give the statesman new strength for

the task he had to perform. Nothing was more remarkable than the way in which Arthur Lumley's presence seemed to act as a kind of subtle elixir upon almost all men and women with whom he was brought in contact.

Slowly and with more than one embarrassed pause Harcourt told the story,—told the other that he was no longer poor, no longer a dependent, no longer an insignificant outsider. As the strange and unexpected news fell upon the young man's ears his colour deepened and his eye grew strangely bright, but he said nothing. Then Harcourt turned from that part of the subject and spoke of Gerald, and here the face of the man who was now the master of the house changed once more, and assumed a look expressive of the deepest commiseration.

"You have everything in your own hands, Captain Lumley. In the eye of the law that poor boy is a stranger here, with no more claim upon his father's property and his father's name than any beggar in the streets. It is not for me to blame the law, which in the main is a wise and good one; but assuredly no one can doubt that in this instance it involves terrible hardships upon an innocent man. When this afternoon for the first time during the many years that I have carried this heavy secret—and God knows I have felt it to be a heavy one—I mentioned it to a friend and asked his advice, he besought me to offer you something or anything to forego your claim and allow the mantle of the father to descend upon the son."

As Harcourt said this he turned a keen, searching gaze upon the other, but the only sign which Arthur gave to show that he heard was a long, deep-drawn breath.

"I make no such proposals to you, Captain Lumley," continued Harcourt, "because I believe the matter does not lie either in your hands or in mine; but you must pardon me if, as the oldest friend of your uncle, I ask you at once to deal generously with your cousin. It needs no words of mine to enable you to see how hard his lot is, a harder one could hardly be. Everything is yours, and you must remember that your happiness as much as Gerald's will depend upon your making a right use of the wealth which you have suddenly acquired."

With an air of the most perfect self-possession, and with a voice so clear and even that any casual stranger hearing it would have imagined that it was making only the most common-place observation, Captain Lumley said:

"My cousin may trust himself to me, sir. This news has of course taken me by surprise, but Gerald may rest assured that I shall do all that is fair."

Was Harcourt disappointed by the words and by the manner



in which they were uttered? It almost seemed that he was. At any rate he stood a moment without speaking, and then merely saying, "Very well, he can only trust himself to you," he left the room to perform the heavier part of his task.

A sore task it was, as the reader may imagine. Gladly would Harcourt have deferred it if it had been possible to do so; but he wisely felt that every moment that he delayed the communication he had to make, the more difficult would it be to make it. So Gerald, roused from his uneasy sleep, learned all. The lad, stunned already by his father's death, was yet more bewildered by this announcement. The only portion of it, indeed, which he seemed able to grasp was the statement that his cousin was master of the house, and succeeded his father. At this news all his pent-up anguish found vent in a wild burst of rage and jealousy against the man who had, as he thought, supplanted him. Harcourt, knowing what the boy's temper was, had been prepared for something of this sort, but the reality far surpassed his anticipations. Gerald, indeed, seemed to be positively possessed, and the older man feared that if the cousins were to meet some terrible exhibition of violence would take place on the part of the disinherited son. All his efforts to soothe the youth were in vain, until he reminded him at length that whatever his feelings might be towards his cousin, they must at present be restrained out of respect to the memory of the man who had just died. Gradually after this Gerald became calmer, until at last his friend forced from him a promise that he would do his best to hide his feelings from his cousin.

Then it occurred to Harcourt that the best thing he could do would be to bring the two face to face. Possibly he was mistaken in the idea, but nevertheless he carried it out in the belief that Arthur would be touched by Gerald's anguish and despair, and that the latter would perceive that his cousin was still resolved to be his friend.

So he brought the cousins together, and quietly stole out of the room, leaving them to meet alone.

On Gerald's face there were the traces of deep agitation. Grief for the death of his father was of course written there; but over and above such grief there were the signs of severe mental emotion occasioned by the news which he had just heard with respect to himself. It was a white, tear-stained face that he turned towards his cousin as the latter entered, and his eyes were fixed and haggard.

Had the world been looking on at that meeting it would assuredly have said that nothing could have been more touching, nothing more soothing, than the manner in which Arthur

Lumley gently stole into the room, and advancing to his cousin laid his soft, white hand upon the boy's arm. Even Harcourt, who had for some time past entertained an unaccountable dislike to the Captain, felt, as he saw him enter the room, that he had done him injustice.

When Arthur touched his cousin's arm the latter moved moodily away from him, but said nothing. For a moment neither spoke, but at last Arthur, without raising his eyes from the ground, murmured,

"Gerald, this is very sad. I assure you I have been most painfully surprised."

Such a look of scorn and contempt was shot from the eyes of the other when he heard these words that it is hard to see how even Captain Lumley's self-possession would have been able to withstand it if he had been conscious of it. As it was, however, the Captain's eyes were downcast, and he only sighed deeply when he had spoken. Apparently he was waiting for an answer, but none came.

Then he added, "Do you not believe me, Gerald?"

"Hypocrite!" said the boy in a low, bitter voice, full of suppressed passion and indignation, "You know you lie!"

Then Gerald Lumley, the disinherited bastard, rose up and left the room where his cousin, the heir, and now the master of the house, was sitting.

## CHAPTER V.

### CARNY HICKSON'S GOOD ADVICE.

It is hard not to feel some sympathy even with the worst of men when he is suddenly lifted from a position of poverty and dependence to one of wealth and power. A great and sudden success is almost as touching as sudden disaster. In either case the world feels that the man who is the subject of the change of fortune demands its sympathy, and, after its own fashion, it is not slow to give it.

Therefore if Arthur Lumley had been one of the worst of men I might still have appealed with confidence to your sympathy on his behalf. But Arthur was not the worst of men by any means. He had many admirable qualities, some of which (such as his perfect command of temper) have already shown themselves in these pages. That he was weak I grant you; but who amongst us has not his weaknesses? Weak men may become great and good men under proper training; though at the same time it is

true that under certain circumstances they are capable of becoming very bad men.

You will feel, then, for Arthur Lumley as, fairly dazzled by his change of condition and not yet able to realize the truth, he slowly walked along the Piccadilly pavement one afternoon a day or two after the baronet's death. He was thinking about it, of course; for who, under similar circumstances, would not have been doing so? The world around him looked very fair in his eyes as he lifted them up and beheld the carriages rolling towards the Park, and met great men who had never condescended to know him strolling westward from the clubs. It seemed so strange that he himself who but a few days before was a mere penniless Captain dependent upon an uncle's bounty, should now be on an equality with these leaders of society. He was master of that splendid estate in Midlandshire towards which hitherto he had hardly dared to raise even the eye of envy; he was the possessor of an income which many a duke would have considered an ample one; he was lord of all the houses and all the tenants, absolute owner of all the broad acres, of the flowing streams, and the waving trees which were connected with the Lumley Entail. Do you wonder that his foot had an elastic tread, his eye an unwonted brightness, and his cheek a deeper hue than usual? Such strange and unexpected fortune as that which had befallen him was enough to turn any man's brain, nay, it had turned men's brains before now.

But far sweeter than any thought of the wealth and the title which were now his was the thought of the bright, matchless face which he had learned to gaze upon with fonder eyes than he had ever turned upon the face of any other woman—the face of Laura Harcourt.

"She may be mine now," he said to himself as he turned down St. James's Street. "As the mere Captain, with little interest and no wealth, I could never have dreamt of aspiring to her hand, but now"—and his brain seemed to reel in his head at the thought—"with a title and a great estate, she is not beyond my reach; I can win her now."

And then for a moment his thoughts went towards Gerald, and the handsome face was clouded as they did so.

"Poor Gerald! It's uncommonly nasty for him to be sure. But he was always a great stickler for the rights of heirs-at-law, and although he is a little cut-up about it just now he'll soon come to see the affair in its true light. But I must deal handsomely by him. Yes, I must do that. What would be fair, now, I wonder? I've got the title to keep up, but I wonder whether say a fourth of my income would satisfy him? I'm sure that would be dealing liberally by him. However, I'll talk the



matter over with Carny ; he's just the sort of fellow to advise one in a difficulty of this sort." And so Captain Lumley continued his walk towards his club.

The Guelph Club was decidedly one of the most imposing buildings in St. James's Street. The exterior of the building was handsome though somewhat florid ; whilst the interior was occupied by some of the largest and finest rooms to be seen in any club in London. They were rather a pleasant set of men, the members of the Guelph. They had no special affinities for the army or the navy, or the Universities, or the Civil Service ; they were not even literary or political in their character. They were merely a set of gentlemanly and somewhat idle men, who had, somehow or other, floated into the same club, in place of other Pall Mall loungers who had preceded them, and who were no longer known now in the places to which they had once most resorted. To be known as a member of the Guelph was to be known as a very agreeable fellow of the right sort. The men who frequented that establishment were so fond of each other's company, that, as a rule, when they dined at their own homes instead of at the club, they had some of their friends from the latter place to dine with them. Indeed, so general was the friendliness and affection which the "Guelphs" entertained for each other, that Peter Hodgson, the elderly Scotch wit, who was to be seen of an afternoon adorning the rival bay window of Trundle's, had suggested that they should adopt as their crest a representation of the Siamese Twins. The members of the Guelph bore the sarcasm which was directed against them on this point very good-humouredly. Good-humour was, indeed, one of the prevailing characteristics of the club. All the men seemed to have smiles and kind words for each other when they met, whether it was in the morning-room, over the dinner-table, or on one of the lounges of the apartment sacred to coffee and tobacco. One of the effects produced by the genial atmosphere which thus pervaded the establishment was, that young men who had joined it, and who had comparatively few friends in town, soon began to feel more at home there than anywhere else, and to make it, as it were, the centre of their social and individual lives.

The well-bred hall-porter looked somewhat surprised when he saw Captain Lumley enter the club, for of course he knew of Sir George's death, and he felt that it was contrary to strict etiquette for one so nearly related to the dead man to show himself thus early in such a place. Nevertheless, he made no sign as he entered Arthur's name in his book, and handed to his attendant page the letters which were waiting for the new-comer. Marvelous men, indeed, are these club porters. Who ever saw any of

them surprised or at fault? They sit in their little glass boxes and watch the tide of life ebb and flow in the narrow channel over which they preside, apparently unmoved by any of the incidents which affect ordinary humanity. New members come in; old members go out to return no more, but the hall porter says nothing and knows no change. You go away for half a score of years it may be, and you come back bronzed by the burning suns of India, and feeling an alien in your native land. Yet as you pass the once familiar portal to your club with a fast-beating heart, the porter takes down your name with as much calmness as though you had but left the house after dinner yesterday. Have you never felt that you would like to know what are the feelings of those men as they sit in their little watch-boxes gazing out upon the great battle in which they seem to have no part.

It was in the smoking-room that Arthur expected to find Carny Hickson, and it was to the smoking-room accordingly that he now proceeded. He was not disappointed in his expectation, for in the snuggest corner of the large apartment, lolling on the softest couch, and dividing his attentions pretty equally between a cigar and the *Saturday Review*, lay the man he sought.

"Hullo, Lumley! didn't expect to see you here," said Hickson, when he became conscious of Arthur's presence. "I assure you I was very sorry to hear of your loss."

Then after a pause during which Carny, who prided himself on being a man who never shook hands with any one, had, in deference to the peculiar circumstances of the case, grasped his friend's hand, he produced his cigar-case and handed it to Arthur with the laconic remark—

"Smoke?"

Arthur selected a cigar, and having lighted it, proceeded to puff at it with a vigour which was by no means required in the case of so well-rolled a Havanna.

Hickson did not like to see his best cigars ill-used in that manner. He was himself a connoisseur in these dainty luxuries of life; and he was positively shocked when he saw the other dragging at the fragrant weed with a violence which would hardly have been needed by a twopenny British Cuba. He attributed his conduct, however, to grief at his recent bereavement, and so he said nothing.

Then Arthur, anxious to tell his story, and yet hardly knowing how to begin, took the cigar from his mouth, and said—

"My poor uncle went off very suddenly."

"By Jove, he did. One of the most shocking things I ever heard of. All caused by that cursed 'Grand Alliance' swindle, I suppose."

"Yes," responded Arthur. Then he began to wonder what he should say next, and whether it might not be possible to get his friend's advice by putting the present circumstances in the form of a supposititious case. But when he endeavoured to frame in his mind some form of beginning such a statement, he broke down lamentably, and had to resume the savage smoking, which secretly irritated the other.

"I'll tell you what, Lumley," at last said Hickson, unable to allow such vandalism as that which was being perpetrated before his eyes to go any longer unchecked, "you ought really to have your feelings under control. You are positively killing that weed by the way in which you are smoking it."

Arthur smiled, the old placid smile which all who knew him knew so well.

"You must forgive me," said he, "but the fact is, I am in great perplexity, and I want your advice, Carny, if you don't mind giving it to me."

The club oracle was pleased at this token of confidence on the part of the other, and it was with more than his accustomed animation that he replied—

"By all means, my boy; that is, unless"—and his face grew suddenly gloomy at the idea of such a possibility—"unless there's a woman in the case."

"Oh, no," said Arthur, with a bright blush. "I assure you that there isn't a woman in the case about which I want your advice."

"Very well, then; as we have got the room to ourselves, you had better begin at once."

So Arthur Lumley began, and told the story with which the reader is already so well acquainted. As he proceeded, it was Hickson's turn to become agitated. It is true that he still smoked as gently and regularly as before, but he gave vent to sundry exclamations of surprise and wonderment; he twisted his big beard round his fingers, and finally, when the other had finished his story, he seized his hand, and wringing it far more warmly than he had done a few minutes before, he cried with an air of genuine exultation, and with many oaths which it is needless to repeat—

"What luck! what wonderful luck! You're the most fortunate fellow alive. Why, town will ring with the story in less than a week; and, as soon as you can show yourself, you'll be twenty times as much a hero as you ever have been yet."

Arthur had as yet received no words of congratulation with respect to his change of fortune. Hitherto the only persons who had spoken to him respecting it had been Harcourt and the family lawyer; and they had seemed to think far more of Gerald's



loss than of his gain. It was perhaps, therefore, only natural that his face should flush with delight as he listened to the warm congratulations of his friend. It seemed like the first faint realization of his good fortune, and for a moment he was absorbed in it. But then he remembered the special object with which he had sought out Hickson.

"It wasn't merely to tell you this, Carny, that I came here; but the fact is, I want to know from you—for you are a man of the world, and can tell me what will be considered right and fair and honourable in these things—I want to know, I say, what I ought to do for Gerald."

"Do you mean the bastard?" said Hickson.

"I mean my cousin," replied Arthur. "I suppose he must be considered illegitimate."

"Illegitimate! Of course he's illegitimate; and a good job for you it is that he is."

"Well, poor lad, it's no fault of his, you know. I should like to deal fairly by him. What do you think I ought to do?"

"If you were to ask me, Sir Arthur Lumley—for I may as well give you your title at once—in my character of smoking-room cynic and noble savage, I should simply say, take him by the shoulder and put him out of the house, for, from all I hear, the lad's got a temper that Lucifer himself could not have matched."

"Yes; but I haven't asked you as a cynic or a savage, but as a man of the world. Of course, if I were to do any such thing as you have hinted at, I should be immediately scouted in good society."

"I know you would, my child; and I have not, therefore, dreamt of advising you to do what I said just now. I merely wanted to tell you what I should have recommended you to do if we had all been wild hunters of the prairie, or anything else that Fenimore Cooper and Mayne Reid have written about. But, as a man of the world, my advice to you is to provide for your cousin, and to do it handsomely. It will do you no end of good when you make your appearance in society in your new character."

"Well, Carny, I'll tell you what I thought of doing. I haven't made up my mind you know; but I thought that if I were to hand over to Gerald, say a fourth of the income from the estates—"

"My dear boy—my poor innocent child!" cried Hickson, laying aside his cigar and raising his hands in melodramatic horror at the proposal. "I'm afraid your brain must have been turned by this business. What *can* you be thinking of?"

"Do you think it is too much?" asked the other.

"Too much! Why you would make the cub a far richer man than yourself. Only think of it for a moment, and you will see

how utterly absurd such a proposal as that you have mentioned would be. You have to keep up your houses, your park, your carriages and horses, and all the other necessities for a man of rank. Besides, you'll marry. Yes, confound it! you are bound to marry now you are a baronet with twenty thousand a year. You'll marry, and we'll see you here no more. Well, it can't be helped; but I can tell you what it is—you'll want all that money you think of squandering over the boy to keep your wife. *You don't know what women are,*" continued Mr. Hickson, shaking his head with an air of profound gravity: "*I do, my boy, and I've avoided them like poison for the last twenty years.*"

"But then, my cousin; what's to become of him?"

"Ah! I see you know very little of what goes on every day in the world around us. Don't you know that these little scandals are always cropping up? Why, there's Fitzhenry of this club. You'll hardly believe me, sir, but that man was brought up with the idea that he was heir to a marquisate. And what was done when *he* had his nose put out of joint at his father's death? Why the new marquis got him a berth at the War Office, and cut him dead the next time they passed each other in the streets. They had been like brothers up to that time, but Lord Lindo had sense enough to see that he couldn't decently maintain a friendship with his cousin's bye-blow. You must follow his example."

Over Arthur Lumley's mind there stole at this moment a sudden recollection of all that he had been compelled to endure at the hands of Gerald; the fits of ill-temper, the overbearing arrogance, and the unspoken pride which his cousin had always exhibited in his dealings with him. The tables were turned now, and the hour of his triumph had come. Should he act with the generosity which it had originally been his intention to show to his cousin? Surely it was not necessary that he should make so heavy a sacrifice as he had at first contemplated. Carny was right, though perhaps he pushed his doctrine a little too far. Gerald must perceive that he had really no claim upon him, and that, whatever might be done for him would only be done out of the generosity of the man who had all along been the real heir.

Then, amidst such thoughts as these, there came into Arthur Lumley's mind better and worthier thoughts. He remembered the utterly forlorn condition of the lad; the terrible blow which had just descended upon him, the blank future which now lay before him. The young man's good angel was striving with him. Well would it have been for him had he given heed to that tender voice.

But at this moment Carnaby Hickson once more interposed with his cold worldly wisdom.

"I'll tell you what it is, Lumley ; if you do anything ridiculous in the way of heaping money upon that boy, you'll not only live to repent it, but you'll make yourself the laughing-stock of the town. Why, the lad's young and strong, and if you give him a fair start in life he'll do well. He hasn't any title or position or estate to keep up. He may turn clerk or horse-dealer to-morrow, for anything there is to prevent his doing so. Settle three hundred a year on him, if you like ; but, whatever else you do, be sure and forbid him your house. You'll never have a day's peace if he is always hanging about playing the rightful heir, and winning the sympathy of your whole establishment, from the butler down to the kitchen-maids."

"I dare say you are right, Carny, so far as my comfort under such circumstances is concerned, though it will certainly seem hard to shut the door of his father's house in his face. But I suppose it's only one of the ups and downs of life, and we must take them as they come."

"Of course we must. And, after all, at his age the lad will soon get used to roughing it, and I daresay in the end will be far more of a man than he would have been if he had inherited the estates."

There was profound truth in this remark of Mr. Hickson's, though he was perhaps hardly conscious of the fact.

So Arthur Lumley went out of his club, having heard what his friend, the man he had chosen as his adviser, had to say with respect to the problem that was just now giving him much anxiety. He was not, it must be confessed, altogether satisfied with the result of his interview with Hickson ; and he thought at one time of asking Harcourt to aid him with his counsel. But though he loved Laura, he had never felt altogether at home in the presence of her father. He had an uncomfortable conviction that the flashing grey eyes, which the latter was wont to turn upon him, could read his most secret thoughts as well as he himself could ; and after imbibing worldly wisdom at the feet of Carnaby Hickson, he felt little inclination to go and take lessons at those of Mr. Harcourt.

Besides, he thought, as he pondered the matter in his mind, it was above all things necessary that he should do nothing rash. He must make no promises ; he must not commit himself in any way. He would tell Gerald that he would do all for him that was fair and even generous, but more he must not say.

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So the day came when the mutes in their hideous semblance of woe were stationed at the doors of the house in Park Lane, and when the body of the baronet was carried forth to its last



resting place. They laid him in Kensal Green Cemetery amongst the ashes of the great and the noble, the tender and the good, and he found rest at last amidst the shrubs and flowers of that quiet place which is to so many mourning souls the most sacred spot on earth.

After the funeral, at which Gerald had filled the part of chief mourner, a small party of those who had been the dead man's most intimate friends were assembled in the library of his house. Gerald was not amongst these; the poor lad had no longer any right to mingle with his father's friends. Harcourt had led him away to his own room, and had left him there whilst he himself was present at the last ceremony of all—the reading of the will. Those only were present who knew already that the nephew and not the son was the heir; there was therefore no surprise when the proceedings commenced in Gerald's absence. Why need we dwell upon them? In due time they were completed, and Sir Arthur Lumley, Bart., found himself formally possessed of the title and the estates which a week before he had not dreamt could belong to him.

It was when the old family lawyer had finished his task and had concisely stated that everything went to Arthur and nothing to Gerald, as all the baronet's personal property was lost in the wreck of the Discount Company, that Harcourt, turning to the young man who sat with a subdued and composed countenance listening to the proceedings, said abruptly,

“Have you any statement to make, Sir Arthur Lumley?”

Arthur's colour mounted, and for a moment he seemed somewhat confused; but instantly recovering his wonted equanimity he said,

“I have no statement to make. I find myself very unexpectedly in a position to which I have never aspired. It is one involving heavy responsibilities, and those responsibilities I shall endeavour to discharge to the best of my power. As for my cousin, I hope you will all believe me when I say that no one feels more deeply for him than I do, and that ——” He paused for a moment, whilst each man present held his breath, as though afraid to lose what might next fall from him. His good angel had not left him yet, though the struggle was nearly over. When he finished the broken sentence his voice was as clear as ever. “I shall deal with him fairly and generously.”

“Is that all you have to say, Sir Arthur?” said Harcourt with evident anxiety. “Forgive me for pressing you in this manner, but you know that I am Sir George Lumley's executor and the guardian of his son. Can you say nothing more definite with respect to the arrangements you propose to make for Gerald?”

Arthur looked up with his brightest smile. It was like a ray of sunshine in the darkened room.

"I think you may trust me," was all that he said.

"Of course we can do nothing else," replied Harcourt with cold dignity, and bowing profoundly to the little party he left the room to seek Gerald.

He was followed by Lord Cleverly, who had been one of the company, and who stopped him in the hall.

"Harcourt," said the peer, "I don't know what to make of that fellow inside"—and he nodded towards the door of the library—"but my private opinion is that he is either an angel or a devil."

## CHAPTER VI.

### VÆ VICTIS.

GERALD LUMLEY'S life had suddenly undergone a great transition. When he recovered from the first terrible effects of the shock which he had suffered he was no longer a boy. Like all who have had to live through periods of intense suffering he had compressed years of his life into a few days. It is easy, very easy, to talk as we all do of this living of a life which is not to be measured by the lapse of time, but it is only those who have known what it is to do so who can feel how true it is that months of sorrow and of experience may be compassed within the anguish of a single night.

When Gerald began once more to move about amongst his fellows, he was no longer the mere lad of nineteen. He was a man in ripeness of experience, in knowledge of suffering, and in firmness of purpose.

Disinherited! That was the one word that filled his brain during the days that followed his father's death and the funeral. He was still in the house in Park Lane. Arthur Lumley had left it and gone to his chambers in Jermyn Street, and it must be said to Arthur's credit that he had taken this step solely out of consideration for the feelings of his cousin.

Disinherited! All the fair promise of his youth gone in a moment. Wealth, and rank, and position snatched from him at the outset of life. Oh! it was hard—hard. The young man had learnt much in his great sorrow, but he had not yet learnt the chief lesson which sorrow is meant to teach, the lesson which we all need so much, and which all are so slow to learn—the lesson of submission.

He could not submit. He could go away from his father's house and dwell a poor man amongst strangers; but he could not acknowledge his cousin as lord and master of the estates which he deemed his own by right, and he could not stoop to accept that cousin's bounty. His proud heart swelled within him at the thought of doing so, and at times his imperious temper burst forth in the solitude in which he dwelt in such a manner that, if any one had witnessed these spasms of rage, he would have trembled for the youth's reason.

Mr. Harcourt came frequently to see him during these dreadful days of darkness and bewilderment. The statesman was not a man to desert his friends in their time of trouble, and his whole heart yearned with pity for the lad to whom fate had been so strangely cruel. He endeavoured to get him away from the house in Park Lane, but he refused to go. He even declined an invitation from Mrs. Harcourt to reside for a time under her roof, though it must be confessed that the invitation was a sore temptation to him; for the one gleam of brightness amidst the night which had suddenly surrounded him lay in the thought that Laura at least must pity him—and love him.

Strange, is it not, how when some human soul has suddenly fallen from a height of joy to the lowest depths of grief, it yet finds for itself some consolation in the midst of all its sorrow; some straw at which to grasp, of the very existence of which no other person is aware. So Gerald was not altogether desolate at this time. He pictured to himself the possibility that Laura, who had always been like a sister to him, would be something more than a sister now; and more than once, for a single bright moment, he felt as though the loss of all that the world deems good would not after all be very heavy if it were accompanied by the gain of Laura's love.

Yet he suffered too much at this time to be able to analyse his feelings. His soul was like a rudderless vessel tossed to and fro by the billows of a mighty ocean.

Very soon there came something which roused him from the stupor of gloom into which he had fallen. It was Arthur's letter—Arthur's offer to do "all that was fair and generous" for him. When the letter was brought to him by Bowles, the old butler, who insisted upon waiting on the boy with a tenderness and a respect which he had never shown to any other member of his house, it was long before Gerald could make up his mind to open it. He had determined that he would accept no aid from his cousin; but he knew that this letter might contain some offer from him which would prove a terrible temptation, for it was more than possible that Arthur, under the influence of Harcourt,



might have made up his mind to make him an offer which, if he were to accept it, would go far towards restoring him to the position in society which he had lost. So he trembled when he broke the seal, fearing lest a fresh trial now awaited him.

He need have laboured under no such apprehension. Carny Hickson had triumphed with Arthur Lumley, and the latter had resolved to do that which was "fair and generous" according to the manner in which the selfish world judges fairness and generosity. The letter began with tender expressions of sympathy with Gerald, and of good wishes for his welfare; then it went on to point out that the position to which the writer had unexpectedly been raised, was one involving great responsibilities, and a heavy sacrifice to the Goddess of Respectability. Finally it concluded by offering Gerald a settled annuity of £400 per annum and a promise of the writer's pecuniary aid if he chose to adopt either the bar or the army as a profession.

Instead of that wild burst of rage which one might have expected from Gerald after reading such a letter, there was nothing but a bitter smile upon his face as he quietly folded the note and put it into his pocket. For a few moments he sat stern and silent, with downcast eyes. Then the smile passed over his face once more, and he muttered, in a low, distinct tone,

"So, my dear, amiable cousin, you have shown yourself at last! I always hated you, and you've always hated me. We'll see now who can hate best, and to the most purpose."

Within half-an-hour he had left his father's house, and found a temporary resting-place in one of the dingiest and noisiest streets in Mayfair. He had gone away with a settled purpose in his breast. He would be revenged upon the man who had supplanted him. He would expose him to the world in his true colours. He would win back from him that to which, though it might be his in the eyes of the law, he yet had no real claim. Poor Gerald! He had yet to learn how easy it is to make these vows, and how hard it is to keep them.

Even at this moment, with his mind filled with rage and indignation, he became conscious of the fact that it is not, after all, the greatest griefs of life which it is most difficult to bear. He had not been an hour in his new abode before he had found himself unconsciously contrasting the stuffy sitting-room, with its hard hair-covered couch, and its dingy chimney-piece mirror, with the splendid reception rooms of his father's house. And when he had to submit to the intrusive attentions of his hard-featured landlady, he could not help remembering that Bowles was at once the best-trained and most admirable of servants. It was all very new to him, and very hard to bear; and he wished regretfully that he had

lived in earlier and ruder times, when the disinherited knight might have set off for the Holy Land, and returned with glory and wealth, derived from the encounters with the fierce Paynim.

To be heroic in London lodgings in the middle of the nineteenth century is perhaps the most difficult task a man can set himself. He may make up his mind to do great deeds and to make great sacrifices; and he may think that there is nothing after all so very hard to bear in the self-renouncing lot and self-imposed hardships of St. Simeon Stylites himself. But to feel that you are doing anything heroic in drinking muddy coffee out of thick cups, and dining on a hot June day in a sitting-room ten feet square is by no means easy. Before Gerald had been four-and-twenty hours in his lodgings he had realized the fact that it is easy to make heroic resolutions, but exceedingly difficult to carry those resolutions into practice in all their vulgar and commonplace details.

Still, he had one hope before him which made even the little discomforts of the prosaic life which he had now to commence not altogether unendurable. That hope, I need hardly say, was Laura. When he left Park Lane he told no one—not even the faithful Bowles—that he had gone with no intention of returning; and, accordingly, when Harcourt called on the evening of that day to see him and was told that he had gone away, no one knew whither, the statesman was much disturbed.

Early the next morning, however, Gerald walked to Eaton Square. It seemed to him that every one whom he met in Piccadilly knew all about his story. The deep mourning which he wore, and which was so strange to him—though almost so commonplace to all around him—appeared to attract the eyes of all he passed, and he fancied that men whispered to each other when they saw him the story of his father's death and his disinheritance.

It was with a trembling hand that he knocked at the door of Harcourt's house. Once it had been so familiar to him; he had been at home there; had been received on a footing of perfect equality; had been like one of the family. It was very hard to feel now that so wide a gulf had opened between him and the members of this household. But still he looked forward with feverish hope to his meeting with Laura. A few words of kindness, of love, from her would more than compensate him, he thought, for all that he had suffered.

Tom Harcourt, his quondam playfellow and opponent at the Eaves House, was in the hall when he was admitted. Gerald could see that he was very much embarrassed when he saw who it was that the servant admitted. There are some people who, though they have kind hearts and generous impulses, yet shrink by a

natural instinct from the presence of any great sorrow or misfortune. Tom was heartily sorry for Gerald; but he had no words that would meet the case of such grief as that which he was suffering from. It was, therefore, with a very sheepish air that he came forward to meet Lumley. He grasped his hand warmly, however, and straightway dragged him into the library where Mr. Harcourt was seated busy with his papers.

"Gerald! I'm very glad to see you," said the statesman, rising. "I began to be uneasy when I heard you had left Park Lane, and said nothing as to where you were going."

Gerald's answer was a somewhat moody one, for it is one of the impulses of many natures rather to repulse than to welcome sympathy—even when the inner heart most longs for it.

"Nobody need be uneasy about me, sir. I'm alone in the world now, and it won't make much matter to any one what becomes of me."

"My poor boy, you have had much to go through, but you must never imagine that you are friendless. Whilst I live you certainly will not be so."

"You are very kind," replied Gerald, in whose eyes an unwonted dimness began to gather. "I know you are my friend; and you are the only one I have, except poor old Bowles."

"Oh, no! You have many friends who feel deeply for you, and who would gladly do everything in their power to alleviate your terrible misfortunes. The world must, I know, be very dark to you just now, but there is plenty of kindness in it, after all. It is by no means so bad a world, upon the whole, as many people seem to think."

"Will you read that, Mr. Harcourt?" said Gerald, abruptly, as he thrust his cousin's letter into the other's hand.

Harcourt read, and as he did so a dark frown gathered upon his face. When he had finished the letter, he re-read it before he said anything. Then he laid it on the table and looked up with flashing eye and compressed lips.

"Is that all your cousin has said to you since your father's death?"

"All."

"Gerald, the man who could write such a letter as that under such circumstances is simply a hypocritical scoundrel. I don't often use strong language, but I can't help it in this case."

"He's got the law on his side, you know," replied Gerald, in a tone which almost seemed to fix upon Mr. Harcourt as one of the Queen's ministers the responsibility for the whole of the statutes of the realm.

"Yes, he *has* got the law on his side; and he has got nothing



else. By heavens!" cried the older man, stamping his foot on the ground in a blaze of passion almost unexampled with him, "I admire your cousin's smooth words."

And then he tried to comfort the lad by promises of help and assurances of friendship. But all the time Gerald's thoughts turned for comfort in another direction.

"I would like to see Laura, sir," at last he ventured to observe, adding, as an after-thought, "and Mrs. Harcourt, too, of course."

"They are in the breakfast-room, Gerald. You know your way," was the unsuspecting answer.

So Gerald went in search of the girl he loved. The breakfast-room was empty, and he ascended to the drawing-room. He heard her voice, the sweet voice he had learned to love better than any other in the world, as he stood a moment outside the door; so he knew that she was not alone. He was not prepared, however, for the sight which presented itself when he entered the room. Laura was sitting on a lounge, and close to her, on a low chair, sat his cousin, Arthur Lumley.

## CABINET PHOTOGRAPHS.

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### XIV.—SIR ROUNDELL PALMER AND LORD LYTTON.

SIR ROUNDELL PALMER's great act of self-sacrifice, when he stepped aside from the highest honours of his profession rather than violate his conscience by aiding Mr. Gladstone in the disestablishment of the Irish Church, has given him a hold on public esteem—one might almost say on public affection—such as is held by no other politician. This act was by no means unprecedented in itself. Many a man in humbler walks of life than that which Sir Roundell Palmer treads has made great sacrifices for the sake of conscience, and has had no reward save the approving smile of that conscience to compensate him for all that he has given up. Nay, it is possible that conscience itself has not dealt kindly with him despite his sacrifice to it, and he may have been tormented by eager self-questionings as to whether what he had done was after all the right thing to do, and whether he had not in his very self-denial committed a greater error or sin than that from which he had sought to escape. It must not be supposed, therefore, that Sir Roundell Palmer's rejection of the woolsack, when the offer of it was accompanied by the requirement of a pledge to aid in the disestablishment of the Irish Church, was in itself a supereminently virtuous act. But unfortunately it was an act of the rarest kind so far as political life is concerned. It is so seldom, so very seldom, that men who have made politics their business and who are active figures in that bustling realm of compromise where the government of the nation is carried on, are capable of sacrificing self to principle, that it is not difficult to understand the thrill of genuine admiration which ran round all classes of politicians when it was found that there was at least one virtuous man amongst their number. Sir Roundell Palmer had actually preferred retirement from the race in which he was just about to win the great prize to the violation of his conscience. The annals of St. Stephen's hardly could contain a parallel case.

Since he made this sacrifice the great liberal lawyer has unquestionably received some consolations which are by no means to be despised. We say nothing of the approval of his own con-



SIR ROUNDELL PALMER.





science, because that is a point with which we have absolutely nothing to do ; but we refer to the fact that he has not only won golden opinions from people of all ranks and creeds and classes, but has taken a much higher position in Parliament than that which he before occupied. He has ceased to be looked upon as a party man, and his opinion now carries with it a weight to which it once could lay no claim. Upon many subjects, indeed, his judgment is supreme, and he has but to lend his influence upon such subjects to one side or the other in order to cause victory to declare itself upon that side which has the advantage of his support.

A grave, elderly man, of subdued and even melancholy appearance, blessed with a marvellous command of language, and with a clear, musical voice, which is at times almost feminine in its special characteristics, such is Sir Roundell Palmer. The silken softness of his voice is not, indeed, the only feminine characteristic about him ; for all who know him must feel that there is much that is almost womanly in his temper and character. He has that deep reverence for religion which belongs rather to the woman than to the man. He has a tenderness of feeling and a command of pathos which are in themselves essentially womanly ; and he has moreover, it must be confessed, just that slight tinge of jealousy in his personal disposition which is essentially characteristic of the truest and best of women, which Thackeray, for instance, makes so prominent a trait in the mother of Pendenis. Let it not be supposed, however, that allied to these feminine traits there is any weakness of intellect. On the contrary, Sir Roundell Palmer's mind is one of the very highest order. It is the mind at once of a lawyer and a statesman, and can command at the same time the subtlest niceties of argument and the broadest and most comprehensive of principles.

As a lawyer we need hardly say that the member for Richmond has attained a success of the very highest degree. There is no one at present at the Chancery Bar who commands so large a practice as that which he enjoys, and fabulous stories are told both of the amount of the fee which must be paid in order to secure his services, and of the total sum which he earns every year. Clients appear to labour under the belief that their cases are more certain of success in Sir Roundell Palmer's hands than in those of any other man, and he is accordingly loaded with an amount of work which he must assuredly find it very difficult to keep pace with. It hardly need be said that the life of a successful Chancery barrister is one of the most laborious which any man can undertake, and as Sir Roundell Palmer is the most successful of all Chancery barristers now in practice, it will readily be understood

that his labours are almost incalculable in their extent. It must be confessed that it is at times difficult for the outsider who strolls into one of the hot little Courts in the neighbourhood of Chancery Lane where Sir Roundell Palmer practises, to understand altogether the cause of his remarkable popularity as a counsel. He has a graceful and fluent style of speaking which, though it is not unpleasant to listen to, can hardly be styled impressive, and even becomes in course of time monotonous. He has, moreover, such a power of uttering words that he can involve the simplest point of law in a haze of language which will effectually conceal it from all but the keenest of intellects. It is upon record that on one occasion Sir Roundell, having been addressing a certain learned judge without a pause from ten in the morning until two in the afternoon, and being still apparently as far from an end of his speaking as ever, was interrupted by the Court with the words, "It would be a great assistance to us, Sir Roundell, if you would state what your point is." Some of our readers may be inclined to think that the man who could talk for four hours without enlightening his audience as to the special point at which he wished to arrive must of necessity be a man of inferior intellectual capacity. The contrary, however, is the case. No man can be clearer or more concise than Sir Roundell Palmer when it is necessary to be so; but the reader will readily understand that there are times when the ability of counsel to hide the real point of a case beneath volumes of words is of the highest value to his clients. In accomplishing this feat there is no man at the bar who can be compared to Sir Roundell Palmer.

Not contented with his tremendous labours in Court, and with that political work to which we shall refer presently, Sir Roundell it is well known engages in various literary pursuits—by way, we presume, of recruiting himself after his professional avocations. One of the most earnest of living Churchmen, he has in many ways shown his devotion to the Church of England, and has made many sacrifices on her behalf, besides that great sacrifice of the woolsack, to which we have already alluded. It is but a short time since, indeed, that he bought an estate, in a pleasant district in the South of England, for the purpose of erecting a residence for himself upon it; but finding that a church was needed for the district in which the estate is situated, he proceeded to build one before he allowed a single stone of his own house to be reared. But it is in his literary work that he is most popularly identified with the cause of religion. His admirable "Book of Praise" is known to everybody; and is perhaps the best collection of hymns in the English language. It is curious, indeed, to see such a work prepared under the care of such a man; and, amongst the



“curiosities of literature” with which posterity will interest itself, will be the spectacle presented by the great Chancery barrister and the eminent Member of Parliament, carefully weighing the rival merits of hymns by Watts, and Wesley, and Toplady, and comparing them with scrupulous exactness before deciding which were, and which were not, fit for admission to his collection. The traditions associated with the great men of former days, whose fame still clings to Lincoln’s Inn and Westminster, are hardly traditions which have any intimate connection with hymnology.

We must pass on, however, to see Sir Roundell as a politician. Who that frequents the House of Commons has not seen him driving down to the great door of Westminster Hall of an afternoon in a Hansom, and stepping forth from it carrying that bulky blue bag, which contains the briefs submitted to him that day? What does Sir Roundell do with those briefs, and when does he read them? You may see him presently leave the House, when it is thinning at the dinner-hour, and again disappear in a Hansom, still clinging to the blue bag and its contents. But just now as he enters the House, you may observe how careworn he is, and how deep on face and temples are the lines produced by the terrible labours which he constantly undergoes. He has come direct from his chambers, or from the court where he has been pleading, and he has already gone through an amount of labour more than sufficient to weigh down many strong men. Yet he immediately takes his seat in his accustomed place in the House of Commons, immediately behind Mr. Gladstone, and sits there silent and attentive for hours, whilst any subject in which he is interested is being discussed. When he rises with any other man, the cry of the House is almost sure to be “Palmer, Palmer,” and then you have the opportunity of hearing him in his sweet musical voice laying down the law of the matter if it be a legal question, or expressing his personal opinion on it if it be a matter of more general interest, with an authority such as is enjoyed by few other independent members. At times he rises to genuine eloquence in his speeches; it is, however, rather the eloquence of deep feeling than of powerful expression. On such an occasion as his recent speech on the subject of the deplorable murders in Greece, for instance, he showed at once, not only an almost passionate emotion in himself, but the power of stirring the feelings of others to a remarkable degree.

With all that womanly tenderness which distinguishes him, however, and which has won for him the warm respect and esteem of the Members of the House of Commons, Sir Roundell Palmer is not a man who is by any means pliable in his disposition, or

who can be relied upon to do a good turn to a party or an individual out of mere good nature. No man who makes conscience the strict rule of his life can be this; for if principle is his supreme master, it will not permit him to sacrifice it to the mere desire of making things pleasant for others. The result is, that whilst Sir Roundell Palmer professes to be, and unquestionably is, a Liberal, he has on many occasions seriously embarrassed the course of the party with which he generally acts. It matters nothing to him that the view he takes of a question is not the view which is held by his party; if the matter be one involving principle, he will uphold his own view of it to the very last. There was a story told last year to the effect that in consequence of the course which had been taken by Sir Roundell Palmer on the Irish Church question, he and Mr. Gladstone had broken off a friendship of many years' duration. There was not, of course, a word of truth in the ridiculous rumour. The truth is, that both Sir Roundell Palmer and Mr. Gladstone have far too high a respect for their own consciences to take offence with each other for obeying the dictates of those consciences. No one who knows anything of Mr. Gladstone will doubt that in his own peculiar fashion he is a man who makes principle the rule of his conduct; and though it is unquestionably true that his views and his principles undergo much more rapid changes than those of many men, that is to be attributed to his personal idiosyncrasy rather than to any insincerity of character. The truth is, therefore, that the leader of the Liberal party rather appears to be more closely bound to his somewhat erratic follower by the very eccentricities of his conduct than repelled by them. And Sir Roundell, upon the whole, is a thoroughly staunch Liberal. Upon ecclesiastical and quasi-ecclesiastical questions his views are essentially Conservative—as has often been shown. But upon all matters connected with ordinary politics, he is quite abreast of his party.

No one can doubt that his great talents and his consistency will find their proper reward before long. Again and again of late have rumours of the approaching retirement of Lord Hatherley been heard coupled with intimations that his place will be filled by Sir Roundell Palmer. All that we can say is that when Mr. Gladstone has the woosack again at his disposal, Sir Roundell Palmer will once more be, as he was upon the last occasion, the first man to whom he will offer it. That the great lawyer will be a valuable addition to the House of Lords, few persons will doubt; but it is just as certain that his removal would be a great loss to the House of Commons. Still, one must earnestly wish to see this event take place, for Sir Roundell Palmer's own sake. Not that he will gain any greatly increased honour by being







LORD LYTTON.

raised to the peerage, but that he will be ensured that rest from his labours which he needs so much, and which at present he seems so little disposed to take.

It is not often that the House of Lords is favoured with the presence of its great statesman-novelist. This session, we believe, Lord Lytton has never appeared at all; and last session he only showed himself a few times during the debate upon the Irish Church Bill. Yet, when he does make his appearance in the distinguished assemblage of which he is now a member, he is beyond all question the most remarkable-looking man seated upon the peers' benches. Not even Lord Derby, with his massive Roman face, or Lord Granville, on whose countenance shines all the urbanity of the French statesman, or Lord Grey, whose shrewd sagacity and irritable temper are visibly depicted in his eyes and mouth, can draw the attention of the stranger away from Lord Lytton when the latter is in his place. His face has been described by some as resembling the eagle; by others it has been likened to the hawk. We don't pretend to be able to say whether it approaches most nearly to eagle or hawk; but no one who has seen it with its two glittering eyes, and its long beak-like nose, can wonder that men should have sought some simile for it amongst the birds. Remarkable is the effect which this face produces when it is seen in the midst of a mass of the commonplace countenances ordinarily to be seen in the House of Lords. It stands out with a distinctness which is positively startling. It seems as though it refused to mingle with the other constituents of the scene—as though there was nothing in common between it and ordinary faces. The eye passing over the rows of crowded benches on a great debate cannot pass over that countenance. Instinctively it rests upon it, and the mind feels that it is looking upon a man who is in every way exceptional.

Never during the time that he has occupied a seat in the House of Lords, has Lord Lytton spoken before that assemblage. Once, indeed, we almost heard him. It was during the debate on the second reading of the Church Bill last year. At the close of one of the evening's debates, Lord Lytton and Lord Grey rose together. The cries for Lord Lytton were general from all sides of the House, and Lord Grey was compelled to resume his seat. According to custom, Lord Lytton then moved the adjournment of the debate, in order to secure the first place in the discussion of the following evening. When that evening came, the House filled early, in the hope that a speech from the great literary peer was about to be listened to, and amongst those present were some of the most eminent authors of the day; but when the clerk of the

table "called on" the renewed debate, to the disappointment and dismay of everybody, Lord Grey, and not Lord Lytton, rose. The Northumbrian earl had, it appears, in the interval between the adjournment and the renewal of the discussion, induced Lord Lytton to give way to him, and in this manner the House of Lords lost the treat to which it had looked forward.

A great treat it would have been; for Lord Lytton, though like his brother, Sir Henry Bulwer, he now suffers to an almost painful extent from physical weakness, is nevertheless one of the most brilliant orators who have appeared on the Parliamentary arena during the last thirty years. His speeches sparkle with that brilliant and polished wit which shines in his works, and they have moreover that flow of eloquent words which, though it may be somewhat incongruous in a printed book, is certainly not out of place in a spoken address. It must be a long time now since Lord Lytton made his maiden speech in the House of Commons. One of the literary and social chroniclers of that day has left on record some account of the anxiety with which it was looked forward to by the brilliant set of wits and dandies in which Lord Lytton was at that time the brightest star. "He can do everything else, but he can never make a speech," said one of his friends. Indeed it seemed difficult to believe that this man, who had shown himself able to produce plays, poems, and romances, all of sufficient merit to secure a high place in English literature, should also be able to command by his eloquence the great political assemblage of which he had become a member. But when the hour of trial came he passed successfully through it. He made a speech which showed that he was something more than a great author—that he had within him the faculties of a great statesman also. It is singular indeed that the same party in the House of Commons should have included amongst its members at the same time two such men as Sir Bulwer Lytton and Mr. Disraeli. Both these men are great authors; both are great orators; both are great statesmen. To Lytton belongs, beyond all question, the literary faculty; to Disraeli the higher political ability. But each possesses the two qualities to an extent which makes him an exceptional phenomenon even amongst great men.

Of Lord Lytton the author this is not the place to speak at any length. He has gained a position amongst the first of English literary men, and the abundant honours which have been showered upon him, not only in England, but all over Europe, prove how highly his genius is appreciated by the generation in which he lived. Were we engaged in writing a literary criticism, we confess that we should enjoy nothing more than to trace the gradual development of the powers and opinions of the writer from



the time when he produced "Pelham," to the very day when he wrote the last line of his "Strange Story." He has, we know, been sneered at by many men who have never accomplished a tithe of the good work which he has done, but who are blind to the genuine merit of his novels, and open only to their defects, imagine that they have summed up his literary reputation when they have dubbed him "the Inventor of the Beautiful with a big B." We are not going to enter the lists in defence of Lord Lytton's style, which most people will acknowledge to be at times somewhat meretricious; but we cannot conceive how any one possessing even the smallest share of the critical faculty, can fall into the ridiculous error of confounding the mere eccentricities of style which distinguish Lord Lytton, with the brilliant genius which shines through all his works. It is not only as the artistic novelist, however, that the noble lord has won high distinction in literature. He has left hardly any branch of literature untouched, and all that he has touched he has adorned. At fifteen he gave to the world his first poem, "Ismael," and since that time he has added to the poetical literature of his country some works for the future of which we need have no fear. In history he took many years ago a position which showed what he was capable of doing in that department, if he had chosen to pursue it; whilst as a dramatist, he has given the English stage some of its most brilliant comedies. It seems as we pursue his history, indeed, as though he were capable of doing well in every department which he chose to touch; and his marvellous readiness, his gift of improvization, if we may so term it, in whatever work he undertakes, is not less wonderful than the power and genius which he constantly displays. We have but to take by way of example the brilliant addresses which he has delivered on the several occasions on which he has assumed the honorary positions which have been conferred upon him in connection with many of the literary and educational institutions of the country. All these addresses, although full of noble thoughts expressed in eloquent language, were thrown off with almost as much ease as that which Mr. Gladstone displays when he winds up a debate; and of one of the most remarkable of them it is said that it was entirely composed in the train whilst its illustrious author was travelling down to Glasgow to deliver it. When we see a man thus strangely gifted, we need not wonder at the fact that he fairly dazzled the eyes of the generation which first knew him, and that in his younger days it was believed that he was destined to attain a place, not amongst the great men of his own day only, but amongst the deathless great men of all time. That he has not fully realized all the expectations formed with regard to him, he himself would, we presume, be the first to

acknowledge. Splendid as is the reputation which he has achieved, and high the rank which he has taken, he has nevertheless fallen short of the mark which he might have gained. He is not *the* great man of the day; and there was a time when the best judges believed that he was capable of becoming this. It is not for us to enquire into all the causes which have led to this partial failure in a great career. Ill-health, which is now, we fear, confirmed, has unquestionably had much to do with it, and perhaps the very extent of his genius which led him to wander over many fields instead of devoting himself to the cultivation of one, has not been without its share in bringing about the result. Be this as it may, no one who knows Lord Lytton will deny that the influence which he has exercised upon his contemporaries, great though it has been, and the place which he has earned in the temple of fame—splendid though it is—are not equal to the expectations which were justly formed with respect to him.

Of Lord Lytton, the politician, we have little to say. His political career bears a somewhat marked resemblance to that of one or two of the other most distinguished members of the party to which he belongs. He began his political career, in 1831, as the Liberal member for St. Ives, and for many years, in Parliament and out of it, he was a consistent supporter of the Liberal party. In 1851, however, he published that famous "Letter to John Bull, Esquire," which attracted so much attention, and in 1852 he found a place upon the Conservative benches. Since that time he has been the consistent supporter of Conservative measures. In 1858 he had the honour of being selected by Lord Derby to take the great post of Secretary for the Colonies in his administration. It was then shown that the novelist, the poet, the dramatist, the historian, and the orator, could all be merged in the statesman; for during Sir Edward Lytton's tenure of the colonial office, he displayed an amount of administrative ability which showed that he was capable of taking as high a rank in political life as any of his contemporaries. Had his wealth served him, and had he cared for the struggles of the Parliamentary arena, he might have commanded office on his own terms from any succeeding Conservative administration. But he had made up his mind to retire from active public life when Lord Derby was called to office in 1866, and one of the first acts of the Prime Minister was accordingly to give effect to the universal esteem in which the ex-Colonial Secretary was held by raising him to the House of Lords, with the title of Baron Lytton.







## AN IRISH CHRONICLE.

(THE CHRONICUM SCOTORUM.)

WHEN St. Columkill, sadly dreaming in Iona of that Ireland which he was forbidden to see again, tells one of his monks to go and pick up a poor stork, "Which," says he, "has been driven over from Erin, and is lying exhausted on the beach," he bids him feed and tend it for three days, and then let it go. "Be sure," he adds, "that it will wend its flight back to that sweet country of *Scotia*, whence it came;" and the bird, Adamnan tells us, having wheeled round and round a little in the air, flew off right towards *Hibernia*.

In those days the two words were interchangeable: Ireland was *Scotia*; what we call Scotland, what the Romans called *Caledonia*, was *Alba* or *Albania*; "land of ravens," St. Columba styles it; *Albanach* is the name given to the Scotch in all the early writings. If not *Albany*, the country is called *Britain*, as where Adamnan—St. Columba's biographer—says in his preface that the saint "*de Scotis* (out of *Ireland*) *ad Britanniam* (to Scotland) *pro Christo peregrinari volens enavigavit*." The fact (and it is a fact which, even now, comparatively few ordinarily-well-read Englishmen are aware of,) is, that the conquering Scots who, long before Eric ruled them at the end of the fifth century, had been streaming into Argyle, and who thence spread, defeating and finally absorbing Picts and others, and setting their own royal race on the throne of the now united Scotland, were "mere Irish," the more restless spirits of that newest-come among the races by which Ireland was peopled—the *Hy Milidh* (Milesians)—about whose wanderings Irelandwards, such strange tales are told.

Whoever they were, or wherever they come from, these people had, somehow, developed a very considerable degree of civilization. Mr. Hill Burton, no Celt worshipper, surely, tells us (*Hist. Scotland*, i, 330) that, "To understand the ascendancy thus acquired by the Dalriadic (Scotic) kings, we must realise to ourselves, *what is not to be done at once*, the high standard of civilization which separated the Scots of Ireland and Dalriada from the other nations inhabiting the British Isles. It was as



yet a waxing civilization, bringing with it continual increase of political influence." "Not to be done at once," indeed. So accustomed are English people, and Scotchmen too, to look on the Irish as outer barbarians, that Mr. Hill may well call "the notion of deriving civilization from them paradoxical." Yet they were civilized, and the only civilized people of the time in those parts. "The Picts had not even the germ of a literature, we don't even know what tongue they spoke; the Saxons are always spoken of as barbarians. Even in Bede's patriotic narrative, the sense of inferiority is distinctly apparent. Welsh literature in those times was not. The civilization of the Irish Scots, then a rising and strengthening civilization, raised them high in rank, and made the Picts, instead of mourning the loss of independence, feel their position raised by their counting the Dalriadic sovereigns as their own too."

Sensible people those Picts thus willingly to give in to a more civilized race; but, alas, a sadly egg-shell civilization, I fear, this of the Scoti, falling to pieces as it did at the rude touch of Norse and Saxon invader: based too much (as Mr. Burton hints) on caste, and etiquette, and conventionalism, eastern or Etruscan in its character; but still a civilization such as that part of Europe had never seen before, and one which impressed itself far more lastingly on the North Britons than Roman culture had been able to do. I have gone into this matter at length, both because it will be new to many readers to learn that Scot, in all the older books, is Irishman, that *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* means the hot-headed, zealous temper, first of the Irish missionaries, then of the great Irish wandering scholars who have left their mark in so many parts of Europe; and also, because so few, even of those who recognise Ireland's title to early literary culture, are prepared to admit that she possessed a material civilization such as that which is supposed by the provisions of the *Senchus Mor*, or old Brehon code, for instance.

*Chronicum Scotorum*, then, is record of the doings, not of Scotchmen, but of Irishmen, and chiefly of Irishmen in their motherland. When, we ask at once, did Scotland come to mean what it does now, and when were Scot and North Briton first used interchangeably? We even find signs of such a thorough severance between the barbarised Scots of the Isles and of the Western Highlands (barbarised by an overlarge admixture of Norse blood), and the Scots of the East and South, mixed with Picts, Strathclyde Britons, Saxons of Northumbria, Normans, Frenchmen, that the former got to be called "Irish," while the latter were coolly appropriating the old race name of Scot. As to these Lowland Scots being "of the purest Saxon breed of any inhabitants of



these isles," I don't believe a word of it. There is not one argument in favour of the theory, except the bare fact that Lowland Scotch speech is purer Saxon than Southern English; so, too, the speech in the Coombe and the Liberty and other poor parts of Dublin is very much more like what Raleigh used, than that of a modern cockney or a Devon peasant. Yet no one thinks of founding on this fact a theory as to the ancestry of the poor Dubliners. Language (despite all that Professor Max Müller may say) goes for very little, names go for not much more in ethnological inquiries of this sort. Take, for instance, Cuthbert the saint, who makes the grandest figure among all the English saints north of Trent. His name is a trap for all Saturday Reviewers, and others interested in supporting the Saxon theory. It sounds more purely Saxon than even that of Wilfrid, his greater but less famous predecessor. Yet Cuthbert was, if testimony is worth anything, an Irish Celt, son of a princess of Leinster. His mother called him *Nullhoc* (groaning), in memory of her sorrow, for she was ravished by a king of Con-naught, who had slaughtered all her kin. Cuthbert, then, Irish on both sides, but brought up and re-named among the shepherds of Lauderdale, is a proof of what the name-argument is worth in deciding the preponderance of Celtic or Saxon blood in the Lowlands. I say Celtic, though I am well aware that there are Celts and Celts, and that in many points—in their love of the sea and maritime adventure for one thing—the Hy Milidh are almost more different from the Welsh, for instance, than they are from the Scandinavians.

But when did Albany first get to be called Scotland? Mr. Burton, one of the latest, and certainly far the coolest writer on the subject, says, "It is not safe to count that the word Scot must mean a native of present Scotland, when the period dealt with is earlier than the middle of the twelfth century (vol. i., 216). For a long time there were two Scotias; Columba is called *utriusque Scotiæ patronus*. Group after group of Norse invaders was absorbed into the Irish-speaking population, and all spoke Irish together;" the Norsemen getting to speak Gaelic (as they got to speak French at Rouen) even as we may be pretty sure the Scotie population in the eastern Lowlands adopted the Saxon speech. Each borrowed the language of the other; Mr. Burton's impression (he is careful to explain that it is only an impression) being that "the proportion of the Teutonic race that came into the use of the Gaelic is larger than the proportion of the Celtic race that came into the use of the Teutonic or Saxon." Be this as it may, the art-remains, so common in the shape of sculptured stones—in eastern Scotland more especially—are Irish, and nothing else. Look at the figures on Mr. Burton's 172nd page (vol. i.), of a stone at Nigg

(Ross-shire), and of an initial from the St. Gall (Irish) MS. The two are almost identical—must be, we feel as we look at them, the work of the same people. Well then, the true statement as to the change of name—the permanent application, to wit, of the title *Scotia* to the old *Albany*—seems to be that it was gradual. Ireland got broken up; the Norsemen were too many for it, and warring clans and septs began to imitate only too well the lawless habits of the invaders. “By a sort of law of attraction, the term *Scotia* gradually loosened its hold on the old country, and attaching itself entirely to the new, gave it the name by which it is now known in history,” (Burton, i., 216). Marianus Scotus, writing in Germany, speaks of the death of King Duncan in (our modern) *Scotia*; himself and his companion monks he simply calls *Scoti*, whether of old or new Scotland he does not say. The word is as ambiguous as Horace tells us Teucer was assured that Salamis should be. All this, then, will explain very well why a Chronicle of Scots should yet be a narrative of events in Ireland.

To that chronicle let me now keep; reserving to the end a few remarks on the old Scotie civilization as hinted at in the chronicle itself, and summarized by Mr. Burton. But first, to whom do we owe the preservation of this one here republished?

About the year 1585, at Leckan Mic Firbis, in the county of Sligo, where (he tells us) his family had long kept a school of history, and written books “of history, annals, and poetry,” was born Dubhaltach Mac Firbisigh. I give it with all its consonants and vowels too, none of which are unessential to the true pronunciation, the Celtic scholar will tell you; for Erse is in this like Arabic—those to the manner born affirm that no outlander can ever “get his tongue round the corners of the words.” He Englished it into Dudley Firbisse, with that fatal weakness which the Scot in his soft Irish motherland has always shown for adopting foreign changes, so different from the glorious stubbornness of that other Scot whose emblem is the thistle. In his large genealogical work, Mac Firbis claims kindred with “the two aristocratic families of Forbes of Drominoir, in Scotland, or wherever else they are to be found as Scotchmen in the three kingdoms.” I do not know whether the claim would be allowed. In old old times it would have been an honour to be related to the men who were hereditary poets to the O’Dowds, princes of Hy Fiachrach. But the O’Dowds have been rather down on their luck, since 1641 at any rate, when their lands were forfeited, and given to somebody named Wood.

Even before that, the Mac Firbis had been decaying. Of old they held the land and castle of Leckan in right of their profession. But feudal land-law knew nothing of poets’ rights or

ollamhs' privileges. Their lands had reverted to the O'Dowds, who, in an inquisition taken at Sligo in 1625, is described as "seized (among other possessions) of the castle, town, and quarters of Leckan Mic Firisigh." It did not much matter, however, to whom the land belonged—to chieftain or to bard—during those wretched twenty years; and it was well that Dubhaltach should early learn that his profession was at a discount, and so should follow it solely for the love of it, and not with any hope of profit. Certainly he was disappointed if he hoped for any reward either material or in the way of honour. He was steeped in poverty. Probably the most "comfortable" years of his man's life were those spent in St. Nicholas College, Galway. Galway, however, surrendered to the Parliament in 1652. Dr. Lynch, his fast friend, fled to France.

Better for Mac Firis had he followed his example. Instead of doing so he staid on, copying the old MSS. which, carried in the bosoms of outcast bards, and hidden away in damp holes, were fast falling into irretrievable decay, making his own genealogical works, his glossaries, &c.; and, three years afterwards, Sir John Ware, then busy collecting matter for his *Antiquities and Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, picks him up and employs him to collect and translate portions of the old Irish Annals. Ware gave him bread (kept him in his house in Dublin); but he denied him fame. He makes no reference in any of his books to the services which Mac Firis rendered to him; nay, he never even mentions his name, and it is from Harris, his editor, and others, that we learn how much Ware owed to the great Irish scholar. He was almost the last of his class, as he was the last of his race. O'Flaherty outlived him some thirty years, also reduced to extreme poverty by the confiscation of his patrimony; so that Dr. Thos. Molyneux, journeying into Connaught, in 1709, says: "I went to see old Flaherty, who lives, very old, in a miserable condition some three hours west of Galway. I expected to see here some old Irish MSS., but his ill fortune has stripped him of these as well as other goods, so that he has nothing now left but some few of his own writings, and a few old rummish books of history printed."

That is the picture of the last of the ollamhs in the year of grace 1709. Thenceforth they degenerated into the hedge schoolmasters, of whom the race has now been in turn ousted by the "national." Well may we say, "How dimm'd is the glory that circled the Gael." As I stood just after the famine by the ruined church of Kilmacillogue beyond Kenmare, and saw the rough stone over the lately buried O'Sullivan, and read *pater patriæ* rudely carved under his name, I felt that his son, (tenant farmer who still "kept a piper,") and the broken-down old man



who had just been telling me the story of St. Quinlan's lake with the moving islands, and church, and tombstone, and all, were strictly in proportion. The farmer was the descendant of the chief, the old story-teller of the ollamh, the Mac Firbis of to-day, with genealogies enough at his tongue's tip to settle the descent of half Munster, while the ruined gable and the coarse slab were the modern equivalents for Cormac's chapel, and for crosses like those of Monaster boice.

Did I say the Irish were a soft yielding folk? I am afraid that, now, they are as stubborn as the Scots, only not in regard to such important things. However, I don't want to be political; I only say that the existence of men who preserve in some form or other the lore of the Clann Firbis, the Mac Egan, the O'Davoren, and all the other hereditary historians and genealogists, explains to a considerable extent the thoroughly different way in which Englishmen and Irishmen look at history. The former is content to take things as they are; for the latter there is no such thing as an "accomplished fact," he, and not the Englishman, is really the man who never knows when he is beaten; and as the fifty changes which have already passed on almost every acre of Irish land may be followed (he fondly dreams) by a restitution of all things, it is well to know "who was who" as far back as the days of Brian Boroihme at any rate.

Mac Firbis, then, is a character worth study; for we still find his representative, in a very humble shape it is true, in many a village in the west, nay, now and then in a Dublin or Glasgow or London back slum. His life, and the introduction of which it forms a part, are, for the general reader, by far the most interesting portion of the volume, one of the few which the Master of the Rolls has given to Irish antiquities; and Mr. Hennessy deserves great credit for having put the story into such a readable shape. Of Mac Firbis's death I may say with Hecuba:

*τί τὰκτός τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν.*

It is a "story of the times," that is all. The poor old man was walking up to Dublin, probably to seek help from Sir John Ware's son. He put up for the night at a little shop in Dunflin. While he was resting in the back shop, a "young gentleman" (says Mr. Hennessy, using that much-abused word in its technical sense), one of those "gentlemen" who, more than any other beings, are accountable for the present state of Ireland, came into the shop and began to take liberties with the girl who was serving. She told him the old gentleman in the next room would see him, whereupon the savage

took a knife up from the counter, rushed in, and stabbed Mac Firbis to the heart. The murderer escaped, for he was a Crofton, one of the dominant race: I am not certain that even the law about killing a "mere Irishman" had yet been repealed. Mac Firbis dies a dog's death, and his last great work, still unfinished, "a glossary for the explanation of our old law terms, the great desideratum of the present age (says Dr. Charles O'Connor) was probably lost, as the author lived without a single patron, in times unfavourable to the arts of which he was master."

But the Chronicle? He did not write it; he only copied it from some old MS. to which he had access. His copy (that on which Mr. Hennessy bases his text) has no title page. Another, preserved in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, is entitled (in Irish) "The Chronicon Scotorum," *i.e.*, "Annals of the Scotie Race, written at first at Clonmacnois, sometime in the twelfth century, by Gilla Christ O'Maeileoin, abbot of Clonmacnois, &c."

There seems no reason for suspecting the authenticity of this title. No doubt Mac Firbis's title page was lost in the knocking about in Ireland and abroad which his copy underwent. One reason for believing Gilla Christ to be the author, is that the proceedings of the synod of Uisnech, in which he took a very prominent part, are not detailed in any chronicle but this. There is one unfortunate hiatus in the chronicle from 718 to 805 "very much to be regretted (says Mr. Hennessy) involving as it does the loss of that part in the history of his country to which an Irishman can look back with most unmixed satisfaction"—the great age of missions, when in Dr. Johnson's words, "Ireland was the school of the west, the quiet habitation of sanctity and literature."

Strangely enough a still larger gap in the annals of Tigernach has robbed us of almost all the same period, so we are left for that interval to "lives" like those of Adamnan and Colgan, which naturally give the chief prominence to ecclesiastical events. Why, by the way, are not more of these early Irish records published? When we look to the age and importance of the respective documents, we must confess that whoever selects the Rolls series for publication has not dealt fairly by the sister island. Of state papers, very few Irish sets have yet appeared; of chronicles and memorials none, except that now before us, and "the Wars of the Danes in Ireland," edited by the late Dr. Todd. A weekly paper, too short-lived, the Chronicle, called attention some two years ago to the shamefully chaotic state of the Irish records, "most of them lying undeciphered and uncalendared in obscure Dublin repositories. Irish questions have (it reminds us) been constantly misunderstood from the want of accurate knowledge of the his-

torical antecedents of the people.”\* The record office should have a keeper directly responsible to the Treasury: it is this personal responsibility which has made the collection in one wing of the Dublin Custom House such a delightful exception to the rest. Surely, if the Union means anything, it means that Ireland should have her fair share in the yearly expenditure on this account: and though “Leechdoms, wort-cunning, and starcraft,” of which three volumes have been printed, form no doubt a highly interesting dish for those who care for such dainties, and may be illustrated by similar records of Druid craft, if any such are found to have escaped the warily destructive St. Patrick, still it would seem as if many of the Irish MSS., both of those referring to pre-Norman and to Anglo-Norman times, for which Irish scholars have long been hungering, would better fulfil the terms of the Master of the Rolls’ proposal.

Of the chronicle itself, Mr. Hennessy points out the exceeding care in the early chronology, and the very little that is said about the mythical times, on which most Irish annals dilate at such strange length. It is a wild record of battle, burning, “jugulatio,” drowning, &c.; this being its differentia as compared with other records that it gets steadily worse instead of better. Of clerics, for instance, it is always said in early days “quievit” or “dormitavit;” but, alas, when once the Norseman comes in, abbot and bishop get their throats cut like the rest, and that not always by the “Gentile” invaders. This is the style of thing, “A.D. 930, the Foreigners of Luimnech (Limerick) took up their station on Loch Ribh; 632, they established themselves on Loch Erne, destroying many territories and churches. Ardmacha (Armagh) is plundered by the son of Gothfrith. The Foreigners ravage Connacht. Gothfrith, king of the Foreigners, dies of a most grievous disease.” Unfortunately several chiefs with “the Fifth of Erin” are on their side; and so they seem to move about much as they please. Clonmacnois is the special object of their plunderings. Let us turn to the one bright spot in the later annals, when, in the year 1012, at Clontarf, the power of the Norseman was finally broken. “A hosting by Brian, son of Cennedigh, son of Lorcan, king of Erin, and by Maelsechlainn, king of Temhair (Tara), to Ath-cliath (the ford of wattles, Dublin). The Foreigners of the world, such as were of them from Lochlann westward, assembled against Brian and Maelsechlainn. The Foreigners had with them 1000 coats of mail. A spirited, fierce battle was fought between them, for which no equal or likeness has been found in these

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\* Mr. Prendergast, in the preface to the second edition of his valuable work, “The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland,” gives a lively picture of the state of the MSS., &c., in the Bermingham Tower.



times, and Brian, chief king of Erinn and of the Foreigners and of Britain, was slain there in the eighty-eighth year of his age." Then follows a long list of the great men slain on both sides, among them Brian's son and heir, and the king of Laighen (Leinster) and his heir—the Leinster men were with the Norse invaders. "There died, too, two Royal heirs of the Foreigners, and Sichfrith, son of Lodar, Earl of Innis-Orc (Orkney), and the entire band of one thousand men in armour; and the battle raged from the Tulcadh to Ath-cliaith, and the victory was gained over the Foreigners and the Lagenians, through dint of battling and striking and bravery." The worst of it was that, as soon as the Dane was defeated, the sons of Brian fell to fighting among themselves; everybody attacks everybody else; O'Neill gets down as far as Kinsale, burning and carry off thousands of captives and cattle; the Connaught men, too, fight among themselves. Everybody carries out only too well the lessons taught by the invader. Well, spirited as the record is, it is but a meagre account that of the Irish Alfred's grand success.

But our chronicle is everywhere provokingly brief. Of the cruel ravaging of Ireland by Egfrid, St. Wilfrid's enemy, of which M. de Montalembert speaks in such piteous terms, and which even Bede (Celt-hater as he was) speaks of as a wicked and uncalled-for invasion, it only says, "A.D. 681, ventus magnus (parts of the chronicle are in Latin, in Irish character) et terræ motus in Hibernia insola Saxones campum Breagh vastaverant et ecclesias plurimas, in mense Junii." That is all; with just the subsequent notice (683), valuably suggestive to those who know the man, "Adamnanus captivos perduxit ad Hiberniam." There, it is all "as little worth as the fightings of crows and kites." Who cares to be told that in 842 "the Gentiles were on Dubhlinn Hill; plundering of Clon-mac-nois by Gentiles; plundering of Birr and Saigher by Gentiles; a fleet of Norsemen on the Boinn at Linn-ross; another fleet at Linn-duachail; Caemhan Abbot of Linn-duachail mortally wounded and burned by Gentiles"—plenty more plundering by Gentiles; till (in 845) after "Forannad, Abbot of Archmacha (Armagh), had been captured by Gentiles, together with his reliquaries and people; and Dun-Masc plundered by Gentiles when Aedh, Abbot of Tir-da-glass, and the vice-abbot of Cill-dara (Kildare), were slain; and the Foreigners building a fort on Loch Ribh had spoiled Connach and Midhe (Meath) and again burned Clum-mac-nois and its oratories, and several more monasteries, and numerous cities," a little retaliation does come at last, and "a battle-breach over Gentiles is gained by Niall, son of Aedh, and Turges (a recreant who had built a fort for them) is taken and drowned in Loch Uair;" and the Connachtmen too

beat the Foreigners, and, two years after, Tigernach (Tierney), king of Loch Gabhar, kills twelve score of them. This is something to set against all the long record on the other side. But, alas ! the tide turns ; other Foreigners came “to oppress the Foreigners which were in Erinn before them ; and they disturb all Erinn afterwards.” And then a king of Duleek in Meath “rebelled through the influence of the Foreigners, so that they devastated from the Sionaun (Shannon) to the sea, both churches and territories, and spoiled the islands of Loch Gabhar, and burnt the oratory of Treoit with two hundred and sixty men in it, and the oratory of Nurrach with sixty men in it.” Happily, this traitor king of Meath is drowned next year “in a lake, a cruel death, by the chief king, to the satisfaction of all the good men of Erinn, and of the comarb\* of Patrick especially.”

Black Gentiles (Dougal), too, came in yet larger numbers to make war on the white Gentiles (Fingal) ; but the natives had so well learned their evil ways, that of the Sligo kings it is recorded, “they were plundering after the manner of Gentiles so that they were called the sons of death.” Feidhlimidh (Phelim), king of Meath, too, plunders the sacred enclosure of Clonmac-nois ; but (like the Saxon king who carried off St. Ilutut’s bell from Llantwit) he is followed by a vision of Saint Cieran, “who gives him a thrust with his crozier so that he receives an internal wound ;” he must be carefully distinguished from his namesake of Munster, who did what kings in those days were only too prone to do ; for next year’s entry is “Feidhlimidh, king of Mumhan, the best of the Scoti, a scribe and anchorite, quievit.” Unless, indeed, Mumhan is a clerical error for Midhe ; and St. Cieran’s hint had made the wicked Phelim turn monk.

Such is the chronicle, varied with occasional notes of hot summers, intense frosts, lakes turning into blood, two suns appearing at once, and the like. There are better things, however, than these perpetual wars and “jugulations.” Thus, “A.D. 511, Quies of Ere, Bp. of Slane, in his ninetieth year, of whom Patrick said,

Bishop Ere,  
Everything which he adjudged was right ;  
Every one who passes a just judgment  
Shall receive the blessing of Bishop Ere.

Amid all their wild battling, the love of justice and reverence for the just judge, have ever been the characteristics of the Scoti. Very interesting too are the notes about St. Columba ; see how this record of his death points to that intense love of the land

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\* Hereditary head of a monastery.

from which for his sin he was a voluntary exile. "A.D. 595, Quies of Colum Cille on the night of Whitsunday, the fifth of the ides of June, in the thirty-fifth year of his peregrination, and the seventy-seventh of his age.

Thirty years *without light*, was  
Colum Cille in his Black Regles.  
He went to angels from his body  
After seven years and seventy.

We come back to Mr. Burton for consolation ; for the decline in culture and manners set forth in the chronicle is so manifest that it is well to be assured that when they absorbed the Picts, the Scots were the most civilized people in the British islands and the neighbourhood. At that time they had even the comforts of life ; a high ecclesiastic, who was generally a man of royal race—for it is exceptionally noted of St. Cieran, founder of Clonmacnois, that he was *filius fabri*—had we are told his chariot and his yacht ; kings, we may be sure, had the same. The provisions of the Brehon laws speak moreover of luxuries—of looking-glasses and chess-men and lap-dogs and children's toys, and they speak of these as "necessaries," not to be distrained under the law of trespass. "Irish civilization ran (says Mr. Burton) mainly in the direction of dress and ornamentation." What a sad falling off in these modern days—the modern Pat, in his ragged tail-coat, his caubeen, and patched knee-breeches, is just as great a contrast to the old clansman as the cringing creature who hangs about Piræus is to the incarnation of old Demos who used to take his pleasure beside the Pnyx.

Somehow the Scot at home, in his old old home, has gone wrong, or rather has been forced to "accept degradation." Ireland may well curse that fertility which has made her the prey of swarm after swarm of "undertakers ;" for, in New-Scotia, or North Britain, as our post office authorities style it, in that old Albany which has been protected just as much by its rugged nature as by the bravery of its sons, the Scot has held his own and has earned as much fame as he has in France or Germany.

There are Scots and Scots, then ; breed alone will not keep men up to the mark without climate and circumstances to help. But let us never forget that these old (Irish) Scots must have been worthy of their modern namesakes ; for they subdued those Picts whom no Emperor could subdue, whose prowess is evidenced by the number of Roman camps, "more probably than in any other country in the world" (says Mr. Burton), of which remains exist in Pictland. The Picts are by no means to be despised ; who then shall dare to condemn their Irish conquerors ?



## CYRUS REDDING.—IN MEMORIAM.

It is not every day that it falls to our lot to chronicle the death of such a literary veteran as Mr. Cyrus Redding, who died at the end of May, at his house in Hill Road, St. John's Wood, at the ripe age of eighty-five. His life, though uneventful, was an active and laborious one ; his pen was busily plied by him for considerably more than half-a-century ; and though possibly he never rose into brilliancy or showed signs of genius in the true sense of the word, he was always a pleasant and agreeable writer, because he wrote simply, plainly, and unaffectedly, and gave the world the results of his own observation on men and things, in a kindly and genial way, without vanity or affectation, and therefore ever wrote, spoke, and acted like a gentleman. It is to be feared that while the literary "gent" abounds and increases, the literary "gentleman" is growing every year a scarcer article among us : so a brief record of the life and labours of Mr. Redding may prove neither unacceptable nor profitless to more than one class of readers.

Cyrus Redding came of a middle-class stock ; he had no "blue blood" in his veins ; and he never essayed by the help of Herald's College to link himself on, by male or female descent, to any noble or illustrious line. His family, we have heard, were of Worcestershire extraction ; and though we do not know the name or the business of his father, he was born at Penryn, in Cornwall, in the year 1785. His biographers have dated his literary life from 1806, when he came to London to seek a livelihood ; but in that date they are decidedly wrong, for the literary bent within him was shown as early as his seventeenth year, when he composed an epitaph in verse on the gallant general Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who fell in Egypt, in 1801. About the same time he contributed a variety of articles to the "Weekly Entertainer," a periodical now long since forgotten, but which at that time was published at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire ; and it was in its columns that he gave to the world the story of "Cephalus and Procris," which he paraphrased from Ovid. On coming to London, a youth almost unknown, he was fortunate enough to join the staff of the "Pilot" evening newspaper, which gave him the means of supporting himself, without leaning on his friends. The experience

which he gleaned here, he was not long in turning to good account, for he shortly left London to commence the publication of the "Plymouth Chronicle," of which he was for several years the proprietor and responsible editor. Between the following year and 1813, he was a frequent and constant contributor to the "Naval Chronicle," a periodical published in London. In 1811 he wrote a series of able "Letters on the Law of Libel," addressed to the late Lord Holland, who had always been a firm friend of the youthful advocate of liberal opinions; and in 1812 he published two works, each in one volume, entitled respectively "Retirement" and "Mount Edgecumbe," the latter poem being one of the first literary attempts of his muse. Two years later he established the "Dramatic Review," a newspaper published in Warwickshire, and he also about that time wrote considerably for the "Morning Chronicle" and "Examiner," besides which he produced some spirited translations from Körner's "Lyre and Sword," Goethe's "Song of Mignon," and Mülner's "Die Schuld." In 1815, after the battle of Waterloo, Mr. Redding went to France, and for some time acted as correspondent for the "Examiner," his contributions, which he wrote whilst at Rouen, appearing as "Notes on France and Normandy." His "Notes on Wines," which he subsequently utilized in his more important work on the "History of Wines," were also written about that time. At Paris he wrote for the "Morning Chronicle" the "Defence of Portugal against Spain regarding Monte Video," the documents for which, we are told, were supplied by the Com-mandeur de Sodre, the Duke of Wellington's private Portuguese secretary. In 1816 he accepted the editorship of "Galignani's Messenger," the duties of which he continued to fulfil, residing for that purpose in Paris, until the return of our army to England in 1818.

In 1820 he became associated in the editorship of Colburn's "New Monthly Magazine" with Thomas Campbell, who had quarrelled with M. Dubois, his co-editor, a difference which led to a separation after the appearance of the second number. The "New Monthly Magazine" had been started some years previously to this date by the late Mr. Colburn, as a rival to Sir Richard Phillips' "Monthly Magazine;" but in 1820 was commenced the publication of an enlarged and greatly improved series, the management of which rested with Campbell and his coadjutor for upwards of ten years; during this period its pleasant pages were frequently enlivened by stirring lyrics and able prose papers from Mr. Redding's pen. Of the first thirty volumes of the "New Monthly Magazine," ten were supplied exclusively by Mr. Redding; whilst in the other twenty he is said to

have written no less than one hundred and seventy-seven articles, besides correcting the whole of the volumes for the press. The executive of the magazine indeed appears to have been left almost entirely in his hands, for, with the exception of lending his name, and supplying the contributions which bear it annexed, Campbell did very little for it. Of his long connexion with the author of the "Pleasures of Hope," Mr. Redding gave an interesting account in a series of papers which appeared in the pages of the "New Monthly Magazine" subsequently to the poet's death.

In 1830, a rupture having taken place between Campbell and his publisher, the publication of the "Metropolitan" was commenced. Although it was conducted on the same principles as the "New Monthly," it never became equally successful; in this case, as in the former, the poet left the entire management of the magazine in the hands of his useful coadjutor,—being himself merely paid for his name and his articles. One of the chief causes of failure to the undertaking, perhaps, was the want of an experienced and judicious publisher,—a most important element in the prosperity of a magazine,—and at the end of a couple of years the enterprise was abandoned. In the meantime, Mr. Redding had published a volume of poems entitled "Gabrielle," &c., and in 1834 he issued his "History of Wines," which has since passed through several editions. In the same year he established a new liberal newspaper, entitled the "Bath Chronicle," mainly under the auspices of the late Sir William Molesworth and some other leading politicians of his party. Mr. Redding continued to edit the "Bath Chronicle" for only two years, when, owing to some disagreement among the shareholders, he resigned his post. From his youth upwards, Mr. Redding had always been an uncompromising Liberal, and hence it was but natural that his talents and energy should be constantly called into requisition; he was no sooner released from the editorship of the "Bath Chronicle," than we find him establishing and acting in the same capacity for another liberal journal, the "Staffordshire Examiner." This paper, which is said to have been one of the cleverest and most trenchant of the provincial journals, was edited by Mr. Redding for a period of five years. He returned to London in 1840, and accepted an engagement to write the political part of the "London Examiner," excepting its leading articles, and in the following year he commenced the editorship of the "English Literary Journal." It will thus be seen that between the years 1806 and 1855, Mr. Redding established four papers, edited six, wrote for four others in England, and edited one in France.

Mr. Redding was indeed a most laborious author, as will be readily inferred when we state that in all about forty volumes



bear his name. Among the many productions of his pen which have appeared since the issue of the first edition of his "History of Wines," we may instance his "Life of William IV.," an "Itinerary of the County of Cornwall," and also an "Itinerary of Lancashire," beautifully illustrated; the "Wine Butler," which passed through three editions; a "Biographical Dictionary," supplementary to that of Gorton; "Don Velasco," a novel, in three volumes; and a translation of M. Thier's "History of the Consulate," with original notes. Mr. Redding also published in three volumes a record of his "Reminiscences" for more than half a century; a "History of Shipwrecks," in four volumes; memoirs of his friend, "Thomas Campbell," and the "Life of William Beckford, of Fonthill," both in two volumes; also, an "Abridgment and Remarks on the Evidence upon the Wine Duties," a novel in three volumes, entitled "Keeping up Appearances;" and another, published in 1863, entitled "To-day and Yesterday." He edited, or rather wrote from notes, "The Travels of Captain Andrews in South America," in two volumes, and "Pandurang Hari," an Eastern story, in three volumes. One of Mr. Redding's latest works is "A Departmental and Statistical Account of the Wine Products of France." He also contributed the article "Wine" to the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana;" the "Chemistry of Wine" to "Muspratt's Chemical Dictionary;" "Lives of the Poets" to most of Galignani's Parisian editions; "Labour and its Duties;" besides articles on wine in the "Athenæum" and other periodicals between 1830 and 1840, and articles in the "Old Monthly," "London," "Fraser," and "New Monthly," the latter since 1840. He has also been a frequent contributor to the "Weekly Review," the "Foreign Review," and to the best of our recent periodical literature. We may mention, with pleasure, that one of the latest productions of his pen was a poem entitled "The Hatton Bells," which appeared in a recent number of this magazine.

Some years ago Mr. Redding commenced, with the aid of the late Admiral Beaufort, an important work for the navy, somewhat in the form of the "Naval Gazetteer;" but, as had been the case in two or three other undertakings in which Mr. Redding had been engaged, a dispute having arisen between the partners in the speculation, only one-third was ever printed. Had the work been carried out as originally contemplated, there can be little doubt that it would have been eminently useful at various times, as it was intended to contain charts and bearings of all the navigable waters of the globe. During the Crimean war in 1855, he suggested a new mode of throwing shot,—one, it is presumed, that would be most destructive to a besieged place, and at the same

time expose fewer men to casualties, and effect a saving of ammunition. The method was "duly considered" by the select committee of the artillery at Woolwich, and the plan was placed in the archives; but, beyond that, we believe we are right in saying that nothing was ever done towards giving practical effect to the suggestion.

It only remains to be added that during Mr. Redding's long and laborious literary career, he probably wrote more than any of his contemporaries, and that in the circle of his acquaintances were many whose names rank high in the literary annals of the present century, including Sheridan, Scott, Canning, Cuvier, Shelley, Moore, Campbell, Langles, Lockhart, Schlegel, Lewis, Wolcott, Topham, Wilson, Hogg, Santa Rosa, Adam Czartorisky, De Staël, Beckford, and many others, *quos nunc perscribere longum est*.

Mr. Redding has left behind him a widow, and two daughters, both of whom are married. He enjoyed a literary pension for some years before his death.

## THE CAPUCHIN CONVENT.\*

FAR from the haunts of men, beside a gorge,  
 Where Danube rolls his waters deep and strong,  
 In a sequestered vale, 'mid darkening groves  
 Of pine and chesnut and pale sycamore,  
 A convent stood. Tall were its portal gates,  
 And from the niche above with downcast eye,  
 Bearing the Holy Babe of Bethlehem,  
 The maiden mother stood and smiled in stone.†  
 The western hills sloped with fair vineyards crowned,  
 And rich and luscious was the wine that flowed  
 From out the Convent's press. Its garner teem'd  
 With every manner of store; and in its meads,  
 Beneath the Convent walls fat beeves reclined,  
 Or pastured on the hill-side. Clear and deep,  
 Hard by, the lake wherein the lazy carp  
 Would oft in summer sunshine bask, as though  
 They too had drank the air of indolence;  
 And passing fair the river, that did cleave  
 This mead from that: in it the largest trout  
 Sported at will, or gave a dainty dish  
 To the proud Abbot and his daintier Monks.  
 The envy of all neighbours, high and low,  
 Noble and gentle, or of lowlier blood,  
 The reverend Fathers of the Orders Grey,  
 Meantime, oblivious of the rigid rule  
 Of him, their founder, Francis of Assise,  
 Eat, drank, and slept, or merrily beguiled  
 The vacant hours; and, so that Mass was said,

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\* The substance of this story is taken from a sermon preached by Philip de Narni, a monk of the Capuchin order in the Cathedral of Vienna, during the Pontificate of Gregory XV. (A.D. 1621—1623). Some portion of the sermon will be found in "Mediæval Preachers and Mediæval Preaching," by the late Rev. J. M. Neale, D.D., Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead.

† St. Francis of Assissium, the founder of the Franciscans and Capuchins, had a singular devotion to the Mother of God, whom he chose for the Special Patroness of his order. . . . He was not able to satiate the tender affection of his heart by repeating often with incredible sweetness the Holy name of Jesus under the appellation of the "Little Babe of Bethlehem."—*Butler's Lives of the Saints*, Oct. 4.



Prime, Nones, Tierce, and Vespers, Compline were forgot.  
 Nay, and they never kept a Lenten fast ;  
 Nor did chill hunger's wholesome discipline  
 Remind them holiest vows were on them still ;  
 Those vows that Francis taught his sons to take,  
 To clothe the naked, feed the famishing,  
 Abjure the world, and mortify the flesh.  
 More tuns of wine lay mellowing in their bins  
 Than could supply a thousand altars' use,  
 Aye,—so the neighbours said in bitterest jibe—  
 Well nigh enough to turn the Convent mill ;  
 And though they wore their founder's habit yet,\*  
 Grey cowl and cloak, and girded them with cords,  
 And barefoot walked about, the brethren proved  
 "The cowl it doth not always make the monk."†  
 And so from morning until night, from night  
 To early morning they caroused, and held  
 High festival, and worked their will amain.

One solemn day, a day of penitence,  
 Of penitence and prayer,—for said not so  
 The Church's Calendar, and their own rule?—  
 The brethren gathered in loose revelry  
 Within the walls of their Refectory room.  
 Loud laughter followed upon noisy song,  
 And noisier joke, that scarce from holy lips  
 Should e'er be heard, and doubtful jests, passed on  
 From lip to lip, went circling all around.  
 High in his chair of state the Abbot sate,  
 And laughed and chuckled o'er the coarser mirth ;  
 "Faith, by our Lady, ne'er was jest like that!"  
 Sudden, a knock sounds at the Convent gate ;  
 The monks they start amazed, the porter quick  
 Hies to the door, and opens. Creaks the hinge,  
 The hinge, all rusty with unfrequent use :  
 The brother peers into the outer gloom,  
 And peers again. Then by the fire-light gleam  
 Revealed, his eye descries a thin tall man.  
 Is it a man, or one of mortal mould ?

\* St. Francis contented himself with one poor coat, which he girt about him with a cord, and this was the habit which he gave to his friars. . . . It was the dress of the poor shepherds and country peasants in the parts about Assisi. The added a short cloak over the shoulders, and a "capuche" to cover the head. From this the Franciscans came to be commonly called Capuchins.—*Butler's Lives of the Saints*, Oct. 4.

† "Cuculus non facit monachum."—*Old Proverb*.

He wore the old grey habit, and the cowl  
 Familiar, and his bony feet were bare ;  
 Ancient his shape ; one grey betattered robe  
 Hung loose about his shoulders ; and the moths  
 Had feasted daintily on the threadbare serge.  
 Athwart the bones that arch his skull and cheek,  
 Like rotting parchment, stretched his sallow skin ;  
 No flesh was there, all colourless his eye,  
 His beard\* unkempt shone with unearthly hue.  
 And thus in hollow and sepulchral tone  
 He spoke : “ For God, and His dear Mother’s sake,  
 “ Let me pass in, good sir ; ’tis I who ask  
 “ Admittance in St. Francis’ name.” Amazed  
 The porter shrunk and started, (for he deemed  
 It was a vision from the nether world),  
 Fast closed the door, and faster drew the bolt,  
 Then sought instruction from the Abbot’s chair.

“ Stands there, my lord, without the Convent gate  
 “ A strange old man, of bony shrunken form,  
 “ And scarce doth seem to be of human mould,  
 “ Save that he wears our founder’s livery,  
 “ Badge of our brotherhood ; speak thou but the word,  
 “ And I admit him in St. Francis’ name.”

Then rose the Abbot :

“ Nay, the winds howl fierce,  
 “ And the snow thickens on the dark hill-side,  
 “ And the grey sky bespeaks a tempest-storm.  
 “ Faith, ’tis a wintry night ; we’ve plenteous cheer ;  
 “ Go, open wide the door and let him in.  
 “ Is not our rule to practise charity ?  
 “ So haply unawares may be this night  
 “ We entertain an angel. What say ye,  
 “ My reverend brethren ? Nay, then bring him in,  
 “ And place a chair betwixt the fire and me ;  
 “ Fill up the wine-cup high, and as he drinks,  
 “ Bring forth a pasty and a platter, for  
 “ Perchance he suffers hunger. Brethren all,  
 “ Enough have we in larder and in bin,  
 “ Aye, and in cellar too. He’s thin and spare,  
 “ Good feasting ne’er will come amiss to him.”

The strange monk entered, bowed, and took his seat.

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\* The Capuchins wore a black patch on the back of their habits, and their beards not shaved close, but long and clipped.

His head was shrouded with his cowl close drawn,  
 And not a morsel did he eat nor drink,  
 But silent sate, as though the world unseen  
 Had sent to join that awful revelry  
 A disembodied spirit.

And as he sate,  
 A knock was heard again. The porter looked  
 Again forth into darkness, and he saw  
 A fearful sight. In scores and hundreds stood  
 There round the gates, a bony, ghastly crew  
 Of monks, with grisly faces ; and their cowls  
 Waved horribly about ; they stamped their feet,  
 As storming impotent in deadliest rage,  
 And their teeth chattered in the wintry wind.

“ Let them all in,” aloud the Abbot cried ;  
 “ The more the merrier in these merry halls !  
 “ We’ve wine enough, aye, and to spare ; come fill  
 “ The brimming goblet, and prepare the feast :  
 “ Our wine will last us till the crack of doom.”

And so that ghastly crew they entered in,  
 They clustered round the hearth, the Abbot’s chair,  
 The pulpit steps ; they thronged the vestibule ;  
 And some sate grinning on the sounding board,  
 Half poised in air, and shook their garments gray.  
 The monks they trembled, and they all turned pale,—  
 Pale as the new in-comers. Then arose  
 A distant sound, as of ten thousand pines  
 All crackling in the flames ; a deadly smell  
 As of flesh burning, with foul, sulphurous steam  
 Commingling, came upon the senses. Smote  
 Their knees in terror, and their coward tongues  
 To their mouths’ roofs did cleave for very fear :  
 For they were face to face with monks long dead,  
 Their own precursors, and whose bodies lay  
 Resting within the cemetery hard by,  
 Upon the dark hill’s side beneath the Cross.

Then up rose he who first had entered in,  
 The grisly stranger, and he spake : “ Ye see,  
 “ Brethren, in me one who this ancient house,  
 “ This once revered and sacred home of faith,  
 “ Did rule as abbot. Now the stern behest  
 “ Of our St. Francis I obey. I come



"To tell unwilling ears what hath befel  
 "Me and my brethren whom ye see with me.  
 "I sate within that abbot's chair;\* I ate,  
 "Drank, and caroused. I worshipped not the Christ,  
 "I had unlearnt my 'Pater Noster' quite;  
 "I scorned to meditate on the things unseen,  
 "I never told my beads, I kept no fast,  
 "I recked not of the poor; I feared not God  
 "Nor holpen man; drove from these gates the poor,  
 "God's poor; I wantoned, took my ease, and died.  
 "And now I am tormented in the flames—  
 "The gnawing flames of hell. These whom ye see,  
 "These were my comrades, and like me they led  
 "A similar life of lust and gluttony,  
 "And so they suffer torment by my side.  
 "But in hell's lowest depths, 'mid fiercest flames,  
 "Such is the will of God, we still must chant  
 "From out unwilling lips the holy hymns,  
 "'*Ave Maria,*' '*Sancta Virginum,*'  
 "'*Virgo,*' and '*Patri detur Gloria*  
 "'*Cum Filio et ter-sancto Spiritu.*'"†

No sooner did they hear the holy words,  
 The spectres rose, and shrieking, flung aloft  
 Their bony hands, and gnashed their grisly jaws,  
 Half awe-struck, half defiant; and the roof  
 Rung with a loud unearthly sound, "Amen."

Then, as the noise all faintly died away,  
 The sad and ghastly crowd into thin air  
 Melted, and all was silence once again.  
 The rain it pelted, and the winds roared loud,

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\* St. Francis even during his lifetime found out that his spiritual children had fallen into corrupt practices. Elias of Cortona, whom he appointed Vicar-General of his Order, introduced several novelties and mitigations of the monastic rule, and wore himself a habit of fine stuff, with a long hood, and fashionable sleeves. "He had," says Butler, "so much regard to worldly show and advantages, that the ensigns and practices of humility and poverty became odious to him." For these and for other abuses, by which the spirit of the Order was in great danger of being extinguished, Elias was impeached and deposed by Pope Gregory IX. Again chosen General of the Order, he committed still further excesses; was again deposed, and afterwards excommunicated. He filled the Order with great scandals and troubles, but is said to have died extremely penitent.

† The doxology, "Glory be to the Father," was a favourite aspiration of St. Francis, who would often repeat it at work and at other times.

The lightning flashed and the dread thunder pealed ;  
Then passed the storm, and all was peace and calm.

And once again the living monks sat round,  
And aye the Abbot, and his face was pale.  
The porter stood beside the door ; dispersed  
The brethren straight, and trembling sought their seats.

Then rose and spake the Abbot :

“ Brethren all,  
“ Give patient and attentive ear to me.  
“ This is a voice, not from the nether hell,  
“ But sent from highest heaven. Now speaks to us  
“ St. Francis, as he spoke of old. In him  
“ I hear the voice of God, that bids us all  
“ Repent and do the former works betimes  
“ Meet for repentance. Be we warned in time.  
“ Let us then heed the prophet’s awful voice.  
“ In sackcloth and in ashes let us all  
“ Do penance for our sins, and while ’tis day,  
“ Turn to our God.” Followed a loud “ Amen.”

Murmur’d the monks assent, and straightway all  
They change their way of life. They fast, they pray,  
Scourge their proud flesh, and take the “ discipline.”  
They sell their stores of corn, and bins of wine ;  
They build again their desolated church,  
The fretted cloister, and once glorious shrine.  
Straightway again its walls re-echo back  
The reverend psalter and the holy hymn.  
And then hard by a hospital they build,  
And bid the poor man come. They feed the poor,  
Nurse the plague-stricken in the hour of death,  
And teach Christ’s little ones the love of heaven.  
They wash the lepers’ feet, and kiss their wounds,  
And shrive the sinner from the stain of sin.

And years roll on to ages ; ages pass ;  
And smiles St. Francis from his seat in heaven,  
To see the work his sons have set them to.  
And so they died in sanctity and grace.

But most of all the Abbot. He had sinned—  
Sinned with a grievous sin ; but he betimes,  
By penance and by constant fast and alms

And rigorous discipline, had put away  
His sins, and washed them in his Saviour's blood.  
He lived to four-score years, and saw God's peace  
Rest on his brotherhood ; and in green old age  
Closed his calm eyes, anointed in the death  
With holy oil ; and, strengthened with that Bread,  
The Bread of Life, breathed out his soul in peace.  
God grant he may find mercy at that day !



## CLUMSY SATIRE.

THE divorce which has been gradually taking place between literature and scholarship during the present century, has been a necessary consequence of the development of the popular intelligence, and as a symptom of national progress we reconcile ourselves to the spectacle; nor should we be unwilling to admit that the very highest kinds of literature may have gained as much as they have lost by the change in question. Its ill effects are visible rather in that kind of writing which requires elegance and finish, than in that which asks for depth or richness. And, as might be expected, that branch of letters in which our inferiority to the preceding age is most conspicuous, is that which depends more than any other on the perfection of its form, namely satire. A nineteenth century Milton would astonish us a great deal less than a nineteenth century Pope. Satirical verse, however, is occasionally produced among us which, though grievously degenerate, is still not utterly worthless. But prose satire—the grave mockery of Swift, the cold severity of Junius, the dignified scorn of Johnson—this indeed seems now to be a lost art. We have plenty of wit and humour. What we lack is the art of employing them with effect in literary warfare. We have excellent steel and iron. But we have forgotten the art of fencing.

In no respect is this inferiority more visible than in the inability of our present race of satirists to understand the strength of moderation, and it is for want of this knowledge that we now so seldom see in use the finest weapon in the whole armoury of satire. The proper use of irony demands perfect self-control, perfect self-confidence, and absolute disdain of the person against whom it is directed. Either doubt of one's self, or respect for one's opponent is fatal to it. The first drives a man to violence under the pressure of conscious weakness. The second has much the same effect, for he cannot be ironical who is harassed by a secret suspicion that the world may believe he is in earnest. Even violence, however, has an excellence of its own, mistaken as the use of it may be; and naked ferocity in skilful hands is capable of inflicting heavy punishment. Witness the terrible scars which the invective of Lord Bolingbroke has left.

But there are two drawbacks to the use of it, which even when superlative of its kind, make it always a very treacherous tool. It inclines people generally to take the side of the person who is attacked, and, what is still worse, it almost always suggests the existence of some private malice in the assailant which at once diverts people's minds from the point on which he seeks to fix them. But if this is the effect of intemperate abuse when it is really vigorous and pointed, what must be the effect of that which is neither one nor the other? If we can imagine all the most abusive words in the English language thrown into a set of nonsense verses, we shall have a faint idea of what certain critics of the present day seem to consider satire. Now brute violence is not art; but still it may be made formidable. The roar of a bull is not like the clash of cold steel: but we cannot afford to laugh at it as we can at the gobble of a turkey cock: and what the bird is to the beast, that are the critics in question to writers of the grade of John Dennis.

That the eminent person who has recently been assailed so stupidly in one quarter would have had no right to be surprised had he been wittily attacked in others, we should be the last to deny. If there is one feature in his character more conspicuous than another it is absolute intrepidity. He fears the face of no man alive, nor his tongue, nor his pen. And being totally indifferent to the hostility which his words may rouse, he never hesitates to say exactly what he thinks when there is no other reason to deter him. A man of glowing imagination, a master of brilliant rhetoric, himself one of the very few satirists whom contemporary literature can boast, regardless of criticism, and devoted to his art, in dealing with such mighty and mystical subjects as have recently occupied his attention, he was not likely to escape giving serious offence to those who differ from him. And nobody could blame men who were aggrieved by his representations for retorting upon him with all the sarcasm and all the logic they had at their command.

But nobody who had either would consider that he served his purpose by shrinking from the real points at issue with which he might fairly believe himself to be as well acquainted as his author, and contradicting him on irrelevant topics where the author was confessedly his master. Such criticism as this reads, as we have said, like nonsense. One may differ even from Gibbon or Niebuhr on a point of history without any extravagant presumption: and about Secret Societies and Roman Catholic intrigue every man is entitled to an opinion, and to retaliate on all who contravene it. But there must of course be given subjects with which particular individuals or particular classes are necessarily so well informed that to contradict them is absurd, so absurd

indeed as to throw doubt on the sincerity of the contradiction. And the subject we have in view is one of them. When we are required to believe by an anonymous magazine writer that he knows more of English society than a gentleman who has been Prime Minister, we ask ourselves at once what can be the man's motive. We cannot suppose that he seriously means what he says; if we did, we should regard him simply as one of those harmless lunatics, who, instead of tailors' apprentices, imagine themselves Emperors of Russia. But that is an untenable hypothesis.

And now we see the real weakness of all extravagant abuse. It at once suggests the *arrière pensée*; the presence of some overpowering passion, which not only blunts the critical faculty, but induces that state of mind in which a man is unable to see when he is making himself ridiculous. That passion we are sorry to say is no novelty in the world; it has left many a dirty stain on the political history of England. Burke was soured by it. Even the lordly Pitt was made to feel it. It fastened its fangs in Mr. Canning. And it has steadily dogged one who has had the same misfortune as they had, the misfortune of being "right too soon." We know indeed that all the wiser and better part of that connection, of which this gentleman is the head, are not only above the meanness, but without the folly, which nurtures this ignoble passion. Nor should we have thought it worth while to notice this explosion of it on purely political grounds. But the peculiar clumsiness of the method, and the tawdry exuberance of the diction, struck us as affording a singularly good example of that decay of satire which we began by pointing out. And we did think also it was well for the English public to be reminded that the same publication which assails this gentleman in opposition with so much vehemence, used to flatter him when in power with almost equal intensity.

Since writing the above, we observe that Mr. Goldwin Smith has thought proper to identify himself with one of the characters in Lothair. "That's me, I warrant you," says Sir Andrew Ague cheek, "for many do call me fool," when he overhears Malvolio talking of the foolish knight. Mr. Goldwin Smith's simplicity is hardly equal to Sir Andrew's, but that makes his folly all the greater. People were in doubt before who the "social parasite" was. Mr. Smith has now told us that it can only apply to one person.



## DEAD-AND-ALIVE SHOPS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF DEAD-AND-ALIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS.

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FOREMOST among the dead-and-alive objects of London, mentioned at the conclusion of my last paper, should be placed its specimens of the genus human—its dead-and-alive people. Where are they to be met with? Where are they *not* to be met with? In the north, in the south, in the squalid east, in the lordly west—attracted to London as by a magnet they come, here to hide their sin, their sorrow, or their shame. Yes, it is quite true that we have among us not only our own dead-and-alive men and women, but other people's as well. In casual wards, under dry arches, on park seats, between “sandwich” boards—anywhere, everywhere, are these living embodiments of hopelessness to be found; the grand difference between themselves and other dead-and-alive things being that they are *more dead* than alive.

This is true of the lowest section of them; yet, are there none others? It is a subject which I should dearly like to dwell upon—but, alas! the field has been entered, and the corn has been cut by reapers mightier than I. Can you, can I, can any one ever forget that description of old Mr. Sedley in “Vanity Fair” in his ruined days;—the trembling hands drawing from the greasy pocket, for the inspection of Major Dobbin, that bundle of papers—the prospectuses of dead-and-alive companies? Or shall I allude to that living writer, scarcely less powerful than he who is gone—the writer who has pointed out to us the ways, the symptoms of these dead-and-alive men? The standing at street corners, the being “about” places instead of “at” them, the weary watching on the benches of the Royal Exchange, the crumbling of Abernethy biscuits, and the waiting for the man who never comes? In such a field I should be but the very humblest gleaner; therefore I prefer talking to you about something which I *am* up in—and that is dead-and-alive shops.

A dead-and-alive shop is one devoted to a business in which the customers are few and far between. In the thronged, equally with the most secluded, thoroughfares you will meet with these shops; where the traffic is thickest, presenting a striking contrast in their tranquil placidity to the turmoil, the bustle, the uproar

around them. They are not necessarily shabby shops, or poverty-stricken shops—they are simply dead-and-alive shops. The profits of their owners may be as certain as those of other tradespeople ; but, for all the business you see doing, the shutters might as well be up and the name painted out. Still, there is more prosperity than appears on the surface. A surgical-instrument maker, say, cheek by jowl with a thriving greengrocer, probably only sees one customer to a hundred of his neighbours ; yet the man of lancets pays his way notwithstanding. People want cabbages oftener than they require tourniquets. Indeed, so far as prosperity is concerned, you have only to look for specimens to the establishments of some of our best known publishers. In many instances the name so familiar to us all, appears, for a considerable portion of the month, above a dead-and-alive shop.

This naturally brings me to the first on my catalogue—dead-and-alive book shops. Understand me distinctly. Not book stalls. *They* form quite a different species ; although you will often see old book shops and stalls combined. I allude to the little frowsy places, not unusually in the occupation of *bona fide* publishers, which you come upon in the most unexpected manner in central situations. Should you be a connoisseur in such matters, you will, in the sight before you, immediately forget the cabs, the omnibuses, the streams of people passing and repassing at your back. For there, in the grimy windows of that old-world shop, is displayed—from the noble, well-preserved quarto, to the little tome with fly-stained pages, which you could almost put into your waistcoat pocket—the beautiful, the glorious literature of the past ! If you see books bearing the impress of the Cadells and Davises of our own land, you see also queer names and queerer volumes from Leyden, from Leipsic, from Utrecht, from Amsterdam. What a wealth of thought is here ! Thought in the duskiest of leathern bindings, holding together in defiance of time. And if you are inclined to smile at their rude type or their wordy titles, think of the difficulties which those pioneers of education had to overcome ! The probability is that the civil-spoken, spectacled old gentleman, who accosts you on entering, will be a man of learning and research, with black letter at his fingers' ends. He will cheerfully pull half the stock about for you, if you desire it, conversing with you pleasantly the while. He will, too, seem to have a miser's delight in handling his treasures, and will by no means consider himself ill-used if you cannot on that occasion make up your mind which one of those treasures you will take away. Such are the least pretentions of the dead-and-alive book shops. Others there are of more imposing aspect, upon whose window panes you will be

puzzled to find the smallest speck of dirt whatever. These are the establishments combining, with old books, the sale of valuable engravings of a similar antiquity; rare etchings, which, to purchase, you must be able almost to cover with gold. No wonder that it is necessary the intervening crystal medium should be as clear as clear can be! Aged cognoscenti, with short sight and heavy gold eye-glasses, must be able clearly to discern the "*Pinx*" and "*Del*" through the window, or the proprietor may lose many a bright sovereign, or rustling note of the Bank which hails from Threadneedle Street. Occasionally you see displayed in a corner a diminutive oil painting, the work of some Dutch artist of celebrity; whose handiwork commands prices fabulous to the uninitiated. Sets of armour, also, exquisite cabinet work, and other curiosities, may be observed struggling with the old books for precedence. No wonder that such things are not in daily requisition, that a week at a time may elapse without a single customer presenting himself—no wonder that is a dead-and-alive shop!

Another class of deserted-looking shops, but far more humble in appearance, confines itself exclusively to the sale of prints. The more ancient and valuable works of art are too expensive for these dealers. But you will find plenty of modern prints of all descriptions. It is here that you see to perfection the old style of British caricature, a sort of thing which gives an excellent idea of the tastes of our forefathers in that direction. Truth to say, you will be anything but edified by the inspection. Should you be a person at all exacting in your notions of good taste and propriety, I should advise you to let these shops alone. But, if you have the strength of mind to sink the moralist in the antiquarian, you will find much to entertain in their expositions of the manners of former days. Though the monstrosities in drawing are on a par with more unmentionable blemishes, there is still a boldness and graphic force about these old caricaturists which render their productions, to a certain degree, attractive. Otherwise, Messrs. Gilray and Co. had better be passed by.

But compared to some that I could name, these businesses must be considered quite lively. The buyers are certainly few; but there are always gazers to make up for the deficiency. For a real genuine dead-and-alive shop, commend me to a broker's. Not a tea broker's, or a sugar broker's, or a stock broker's; such have offices in the city, with dwellings in the suburbs, and are anything but dead-and-alive. The broker's I mean is a furniture broker's. To meet this class of shop in perfection you must select some extremely busy and extremely dirty neighbourhood. The dirtier and busier the better. There you will find your



broker's shop flourishing in all its glory—though it is a very musty, fusty, foul-smelling glory indeed. Very likely the entire front window is removed, or when allowed to remain, the goods will surge on to the pavement as far as the police or the parish will let them. It is needless to observe that the articles displayed are all second-hand; sometimes third, fourth, or even fifth-hand. Were they otherwise, their place of sale would not be a broker's shop. Sale! Who do you see buy, or even look, towards that shop? You may stand on the opposite side of the street till you are tired, and no transaction of any kind will you perceive.\* The public stream indifferently past, regardless of the old chairs, the vamped-up tables, or the faded glories of the chiffoniers. The guardian of all these treasures is generally a female, shrewd and middle-aged, seated, not as you would suppose on one of the old chairs, but on a three-legged, rickety stool, or mayhap a Windsor chair in equally unfortunate circumstances. She appears sublimely indifferent to everybody and everything around her, but—just advance too near anything portable, and you will quickly discover that she has eyes to see and ears to hear. In fact, nothing escapes her. The chances are that she is of the Hebrew race, lean and keen-eyed and long-nosed, reminding you irresistibly of a vulture. The male vulture is away, his business taking him to public auctions; where he is to be met with, either blandly wheedling intending purchasers into employing his professional services, or terrifying timid bidders (not of the brokering brotherhood) by bluster and abuse in the choicest Billingsgate. Yet to look at his shop, his home, you would think it a haven of repose, with nothing to do but to patronise the wayfarers. Whence derives he his title of broker? What does he break, and why does he break it? Or is it ready broken for him beforehand? I fear the latter is too often the case; and that he lives, this broker, upon broken hearts and broken homes.

What may be termed, generally, the "second-hand trade," is one of the great industries of the empire; yet, seen in its retail form in our streets, it certainly gives one the impression of a dead-and-alive trade. Let us take, for example, the old clothes shops. Many of these are simply the adjuncts to pawnbrokers; so that the dead-and-alive shop is kept supplied by the *all-alive* shop; the unredeemed pledges of the one going to form the stock-in-trade of the other. By far the greater portion, however, are in business on their own account; or rather not ostensibly connected with the representatives of the Medici. One cannot help, when contemplating those artfully "revived" and furbished up habiliments, speculating on their future wearers. The principal customers are struggling clerks and others in like circumstances, who

have to make a respectable appearance on a very small income; not to speak of that class of people who are economists more from taste than necessity. I presume that where the supply is so steady, there must be a demand in some shape or other; yet, for all the visible barter, these are unmitigated dead-and-alive shops. I myself can count upon my fingers the number of people whom I have beheld during an observation, say of a dozen years, making purchases. Occasionally a labouring man is to be seen cheapening a pair of corduroys, or listening stolidly to the persuasive eloquence of the Hebrew shopman; otherwise the coats, the jackets, and the waistcoats flap unheeded in the wind. But what puzzled me most was—who bought those old military and naval uniforms, with their faded cloth and tarnished gold lace?—that is to say, it did puzzle me, till I saw how generals and admirals were equipped at our minor theatres. And those melancholy swords, too, unsheathed and reposing against the cast-off uniforms—whence came they, and whither will they go? At what parades have they flashed, at what reviews have they glittered, in what battles have they fought and won? Dead-and-alive bayonets can be turned to a variety of purposes, in the way of workmen's tools; but dead-and-alive swords—what is the use of them? As now made, they are far too slender and brittle for agricultural implements; they *cannot* be turned into ploughshares—their mission is over; for, except in some fiery melodrama, they will flash and glitter and be flourished no more.

Second-hand jewellers come within the category of dead-and-alive shops. These have a decidedly uninviting aspect; so much so, that you feel inclined to enter and make the proprietor a present of a lump of soap for himself and of whiting to polish his goods withal. But if, in his case, dirt is matter in the wrong place, with the *bric à brac* shops near Leicester Square—our next dead-and-alive specimens—dirt is matter in the right, or at least appropriate place. A clean curiosity shop would raise suspicion as to the genuineness of its curiosities. Its dirt is venerable; its dirt is part and parcel of its antiquities. But what wonderful places are those Castle Street shops! How many months (or years) should I require to give you an inventory of the contents of only one of them? Such pistols, such helmets, such cups, such vases, such anything and everything that is delightfully suggestive and delightfully old! A shop like this, in my humble opinion, is an epitome of history in a tangible form; assisting us as it does in realising a vivid idea of the manner in which our ancestors lived and moved and had their being.

The remainder of our dead-and-alive shops are less “pronounced” than those which I have mentioned here. A musical

instrument maker's is a good business—but who ever sees a man buying a drum ?

Here I had arrived at the end of my budget, and was casting about in my mind for a dead-and-alive shop which should cap all the others, when it forced itself on my attention in one of my walks. It was a public-house with an execution in it.

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## CHARITY.

PICTURE BY RIVIERE OF A BEGGAR GIRL AT A CHURCH DOOR  
FEEDING TWO STARVED DOGS.

“ A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.”

WHERE Fashion throng'd at Mercy's call,  
And the gay chariots roll'd,  
Crowds yielded to the preacher's thrall,  
And dropp'd the lavish gold :

But pass'd by one—all famine-pale—  
Cold feet on colder stone ;  
Scant garments hugg'd to form, how frail !—  
Young, comfortless, alone !

Yet not so wretched, but there stand  
Two of God's creatures by,  
Who seek for crumbs from that poor hand,  
With dumb appealing eye.

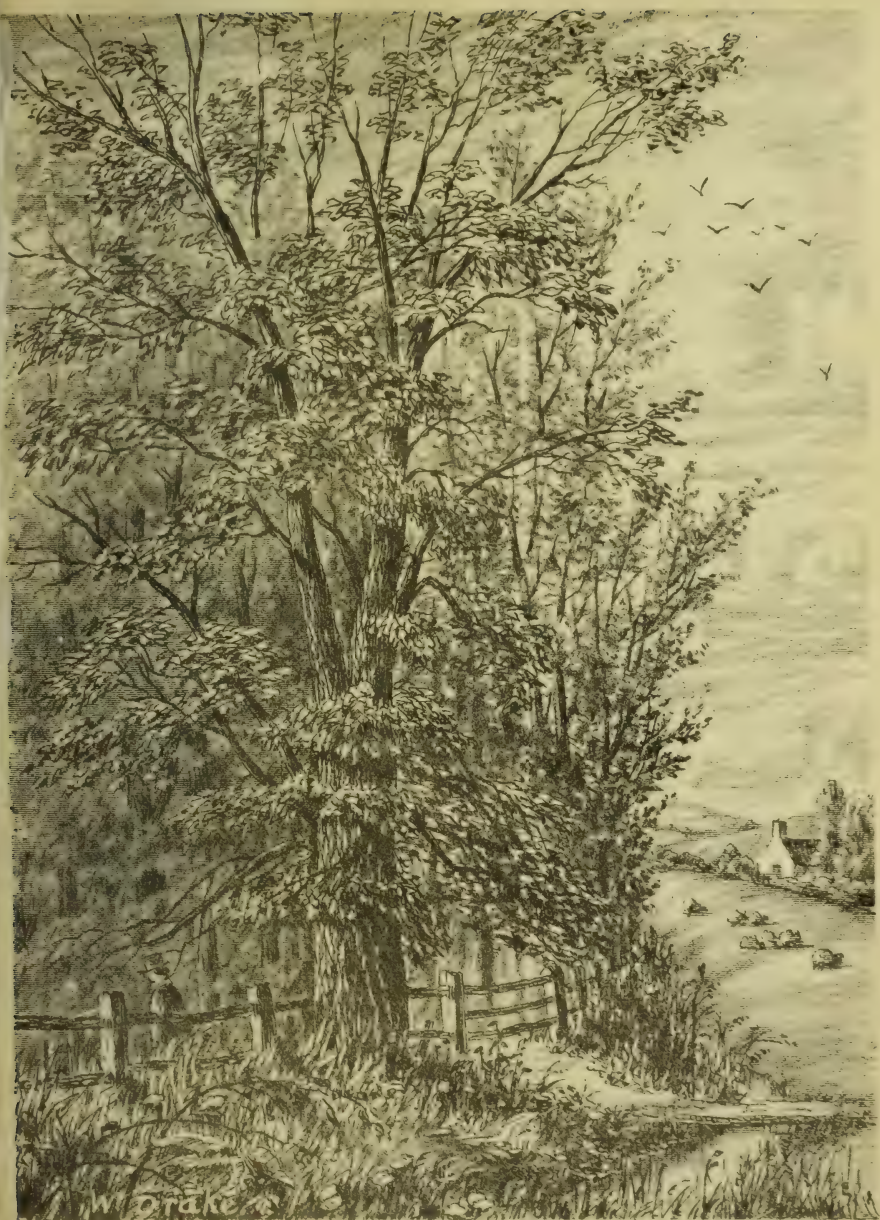
And not in vain, because her breast  
No prosperous gales have chill'd !  
Shall *she* not feel for the distress'd—  
Herself of Sorrow's guild ?

She giveth them, of that hard fare,  
Her last, her only store.  
Ah ! gentle maiden, thus to spare  
Is “ Charity ”—and more !

We *have* seen human eyes appeal,  
Nor meet with such success ;  
For Fulness clothes the heart in steel,  
And makes it merciless !

Fear not Ingratitude's keen blade,  
MAN did not share thy bread ;  
And faithful friends to-day are made  
In those thy Pity fed !







## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RICHARD DARLINGTON CONTINUED.

MORNING.

I fell asleep at last.

Between to-day and yesterday a great gulf seems to be fixed. I can hardly help fancying that everything which has happened during the last twenty-four hours took place months ago. And yet, every now and then, I feel a sharp twinge, and know that I have not hitherto suffered as I shall suffer in the future. Yesterday, I felt a sort of hysterical indifference, but I know now that the full pain of my wound is coming upon me by degrees. After all, though, why should I talk in this grand strain. My hurt is a mere scratch. A man would laugh at it, but I suppose it is something to a boy who has never been crossed in love before.

\* \* \* \* \*

A hangman's day. November and July, in equal proportions. Dark but stifling. A brooding mist and utter stagnation. Nature under chloroform. No sunshine, no blue sky, not even a cloud to be seen. Nothing visible anywhere but mist. Dreary and depressing to a degree, but a fire out of the question. A day of gloom unmitigated, of dampness clinging and greasy, of an unwholesome stifling warmth.

The world a great vapour bath; apparently a vain attempt is being made to ease it of its corruption by steaming.

Not morning, not evening. The heat of noon and the obscurity of twilight. An all-pervading want of tone. An all-pervading damp rot. The grass and trees smeared over with clammy moisture. The rivers in process of turning into slime. Everything that usually moves, stock still. The air fast asleep, the leaves fast asleep, sounds drowsy and indistinct, as though all the roads in the world were muffled with damp straw. Man, who alone can't be kept quiet, shuffling to business with the air of a whipped cur. A day on which you can't be good-tempered, try as you will. A



day on which you are obliged to stop, from time to time, to draw a long breath. A day on which no one feels that any good can possibly be in store for him. A day on which, let statisticians say what they please, suicide occurs as a not wholly unwelcome thought.\*

A nice day for taking a trip into the country. In a word, the day on which I set out on my expedition to Culverton.

A melancholy journey that grew hotter and hotter as we proceeded, as though we were driving steadily through intervening clouds and should presently arrive at the sun.

• Worse, if anything, in the fields than in town. Worst of all, as I plodded up the lane from the station, under an archway of dripping, ghostly trees, feeling well-nigh appalled by the unbroken stillness, by the utter absence of any signs of life, by the suffocating steam that pressed down on the earth, as if it had got its old enemy at last, and were determined to choke it off and have done with it.

I came in front of the gaunt, overgrown house, with its big staring windows. The blinds were drawn partly down, and the building seemed to be turning its eyes up into its head with horror and despair.

I pulled the bell. It produced a sullen, hollow clang. Then I struck one of my abashed, irregular knocks.

I had a strange feeling, as though I were trespassing, or were a visitor at a house to which I was not likely to be welcome.

I was shewn into the drawing-room, where I found Sir Francis and Aunt Mary.

My father stood with his hands behind his back, looking out of one of the windows at the mutton-broth landscape that stretched away into the distance, till it was lost in steam. He was rocking himself gently to and fro, and seemed out of sorts.

My aunt reclined in an armchair, and pretended to be busy with her needlework.

It struck me that some unpleasant subject must lately have been on the *tapis*; for neither Sir Francis nor his sister seemed in the best of humours, or particularly at ease.

As I turned the handle of the door, there was a low hum as from a couple of voices in discussion. It ceased directly I entered the room.

Both my father and aunt turned and greeted me, but Sir Francis frowned, and his sister spoke without a smile, as if she were astonished rather than glad to see me. But thus much was only what I had expected.

"Why, Dick," said my aunt, "you have given us quite a sur-

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\* "The old-fashioned theory that murky depressing weather brings with it an increase of suicide has lately been proved fallacious." *Wide Autumnal Press*.

prise. I hope there is nothing the matter with you. You did not write to say that you were coming, did you?"

She spoke in an undertone, but seemed inquisitive, even anxious, as if more depended on my answer than I could guess.

"No," I replied, "it was only last night that I made up my mind to come down here."

She glanced uneasily towards my father. He knit his brows, and looked at me with a sternness which as I had learned from experience denoted discomposure rather than ill-temper.

"You will sleep here, of course," my aunt went on. "Did you come down for pleasure, or for anything more important?"

"I wanted to see Harry," I returned. "I wanted to see him very particularly. Is he here?"

Again my aunt glanced with the same uneasy expression towards my father. "No, he is not," she said, quietly, and once more looking down at her work. "I fancied you might know something of his movements. He left Culverton last Wednesday, but without saying where he was going. I don't think it is very considerate of him, leaving us without even a message. He has never done so before. And it is a want of good manners, to say the least of it. He may have set out on a voyage to China, for aught *we* can tell. He may have been taken ill, or may have met with some accident. It is really very provoking. I fancied he might have got tired of the country, and have gone up for a change to London to see you."

"Dear me," I said, really a little surprised, "what could have induced you to think that?"

"I am sure I can't tell," replied my aunt, glancing towards my father, who was in the act of leaving the room. "One *does* fancy things now and then, without exactly knowing the reason why. You and Harry don't get on very well together, I know, but still you are not sworn enemies. I suppose, if he went up to London, he would rather depend on you than on a comparative stranger?"

"But why should he depend on anybody?"

"Well, living out of the world as we do, he has not many friends or acquaintances in town, though, to be sure, if he had, he would find most of them away at this time of the year, and it is rather dull spending a week or two in lodgings by yourself. If he *has* gone up to London, I suppose it is with the intention of going about a bit, and it is rather dull travelling in search of enjoyment alone."

"Well, perhaps so; but I really don't think Harry is of a very sociable turn of mind."

"I wish you two would manage to get on together a little bet-

ter," said my aunt. She settled herself comfortably in her chair, and seemed in the humour to moralize. "I don't see," she presently continued, "that you have anything to quarrel about, and this perpetual bickering is very annoying both to Sir Francis and myself. I think nothing is so discreditable as family squabbles. The absurd disagreements between your grandfather and his brother made us the laughing-stock of the whole county, and the lawsuits they were for ever carrying on half ruined the estate. Nobody could attend to anything but ejectments and writs of error, and mandamuses, and higher courts. I don't know how much money was wasted over ridiculous skirmishings that led to nothing, and conversation became an impossibility. It was law, law, law, from morning till night."

"I am very sorry," I said, "that the Darlingtones are so quarrelsome. I have no wish to make myself disagreeable, but if Harry will fight with me how can I help it. I should very much like to know, though, what has become of him?"

"And so should I," said my aunt seriously. "I was in hopes you could have enlightened me. But I almost doubt whether you would do so if you could. The Darlingtones can't live at peace. The elder brother and the younger *must* always be quarreling. In the good old days they fought duels, and now they go to law and sneer behind each other's backs. But there is the dinner-bell. I think you know your room. The one over the portico—the one that you had when you were here last."

"Aunt Mary," I said suddenly, "if I knew anything at all about my brother I would tell it you willingly, but really I am as much in the dark as you are yourself. However, I don't think there is any need to be anxious. He is not at all the sort of fellow to expose himself unnecessarily. I am as anxious to see him as you are yourself, and the sooner he turns up, perhaps, the better it will be for his own credit and for that of all of us."

My aunt looked at me inquiringly, but I was not in the humour to say anything more. Indeed I felt that I had said too much already; but my mischief-making temper is always getting the better of me. I was irritated, in my jealous way, to find that the thoughts both of Sir Francis and his sister were bound up in Harry. I had not come down on any very pleasant business, but I was annoyed at the cold welcome that I had received, and I could not help being a little vicious at the expense of a brother who seemed to absorb the affections of the whole house. I was never a popular character anywhere, though I have tried to become one. I could never get on, for instance, with servants. They seem to resent my civility; why I can never make out. As for Harry, he was *brusque* enough in his manners, and even swore at



the men when they annoyed him ; but it was easy to see that he was a favourite, and I am sure the maids esteemed him a perfect little duck.

To return. When I went down again to the drawing-room I found my aunt deep in the perusal of a note just arrived by post, and looking more disconcerted and angry than I had ever seen her before.

Having finished the letter she handed it to my father with an expression of despair. He read it carefully through, frowned, jerked his head, made a whistling noise between his teeth, and gave the note back to his sister with a face as black as a thunder-cloud.

"They must be mad," said Aunt Mary in a tone of deep annoyance, but deprecatory at the same time.

Sir Francis said nothing, but again jerked his head, and produced a long-drawn guttural sound that was a growl and a groan combined.

In the meanwhile I had been standing by, an astonished observer.

Aunt Mary glanced towards her brother, and seeing no sign of dissent on his face handed me the letter.

I read it and was confounded. My heart seemed to rise into my throat ; I turned dizzy, and felt as if I should fall to the ground.

Anyone who reads the copy given below will not be surprised at my emotion. I must add that the note had neither address nor date.

"DEAR AUNT MARY,

"I dare say you will consider it very imprudent, but I am married. It is a love match though, and to Ella Cheston, whom you know and whom I fancy you like. Anyhow the thing is done now and past undoing, and though I may not have acted very wisely I think you will agree with me that nothing remains but to make the best of what has happened. Please let Sir Francis know what I have told you in the way you think best. You have always been my dear good aunt, be so now. I hope to see you at Culverton to-morrow, and will explain the why and wherefore. It is a very mysterious business you will say, but when you hear everything I am quite sure you will feel that I could only have acted as I have done. Don't be angry, or I shall be utterly miserable. I have no one to help me but you. I rely on your kindness and cleverness. With best love believe me ever

"Your affectionate nephew,

"HARRY DARLINGTON."

"Dick," said Aunt Mary.

I could not speak, but stared at her vacantly.

"Another letter, and for you I think."

"Yes, sir," said the maid-servant who had brought it in; "it was left downstairs by mistake. I only noticed it just now as I was passing the table."

I glanced at the handwriting—Ella's.

I grasped the back of a chair, and again felt the blood rising to my brain, and saw nothing but a red surging mist.

I opened the envelope, and with a throbbing heart read hurriedly as follows:—

"DEAR MR. RICHARD DARLINGTON,—

"I do hope you will not be offended, but I am such a wicked creature. Now you must not be angry; you must not indeed. Harry and I have been *married*. I can only whisper the terrible word. My mischievous boy tells me you expected something very different from this; but no, it is all his nonsense, I am sure. You who were so reticent and sometimes seemed even to dislike me,—no, it is impossible; though, to be sure, you men often expect a great deal from us poor stupid women. Oh, I say such silly things you really *must* forgive me; it is only my madcap way of talking. I was always famous for it, as you know. I daresay you will think me very cruel, but admitting for argument's sake—which I really mustn't do—that what a certain naughty boy of mine whispers was really the case, I should have made somebody I know such a plague of a little wife. I am sure *you* don't care for balls and parties and frivolities of that sort, and I am such a silly thing I have no head for anything else, so what I did is all for the best as you will see. No, now you must not get in a passion. I am only joking, and Harry has had nothing at all to do with my writing to you, so you must not quarrel with *him*. Now be a good boy and I will really be quite fond of you for ever such a time. Put all silly notions out of your head, and laugh at my mad prattle; it does not deserve any better treatment. By the bye, it was a runaway match; I shan't tell you why now, though you shall know some day or another if you behave yourself. Do speak a good word, you dear forgiving creature, to Sir Francis and Aunt Mary. I am so frightened, and so is Harry. I am such a poor thing, you know—not at all a good match—and somebody whom I shan't name is well rid of me. Oh, what am I saying? We are going to Culverton and shall drop on our knees and beg for forgiveness. Please say a good word for us. You must not be angry at my absurd rattlebrain talk; you know what a flighty silly old quiz I always was. Now I shall rely upon you;

mind *that*. Oh, you *must* help us out of our scrape; you have known me ever since I was a little wretch in long clothes. We shall be at the old house almost as soon as you get this, and I rely upon finding that you have *done wonders*. I expect to be forgiven and blessed quite in an affecting way and all through you. Oh, I am trembling so that I can't write any more. Good, solemn, kindhearted, *forgiving* Richard Darlington is now the only hope of silly, imprudent, frightened-out-of-her-wits little

“ELLA CHESTON (oh dear, what a mistake) DARLINGTON.

“I scratch out the first ugly word.

“P.S.—By-the-bye, now I come to think of it, you are up in London, and will not get this letter till after we have seen Sir Francis and your Aunt and have pleaded our own cause. I am really sorry for this, because I am sure you would have been glad to do us a good turn. But no matter. The letter shall go now that it is written, and it will be forwarded in due time to your address in Gray's Inn. I am sure you would sooner hear of our marriage from myself than from anyone else.”

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF RICHARD DARLINGTON RESUMED.

A CHANGE in the weather.

Summer is back again. It is as hot as in the middle of last July. Not a trace of yesterday's mist remains. The sky is cloudless, and glares like a furnace. The air quivers with the heat. All the windows are open, and the blinds are drawn down. The faintest possible breath of wind comes stealing through the muslin curtains at long intervals. The whole house is perfectly silent. Exertion of any kind is out of the question. The thermometer, that was at eighty in the shade, rose rapidly when put out on the lawn to a hundred and twenty.

It is a day for lying quiet in a drowsy corner of some old-fashioned garden, for giving the rein to your thoughts and following them indolently whithersoever they please to lead you, for gossiping lazily or skimming a novel, for being lulled to sleep by the rustle of the boughs, the hum of the insects and the twittering of the birds, for believing that man was sent into the world simply to enjoy himself and to idle his time away, for flirting, if you are glib of tongue and can be enthusiastic and



cautious in the same breath, and decidedly for sipping cool drinks.

It is a day for drifting slowly down stream, watching the dragon-flies as they dart in and out among the tangled grass on the banks, over the clusters of forget-me-nots, and over the tall rushes and the broad-leaved waterlilies.

It is a day for plunging into the dark, cool river, that sends up sparkles of crystal as you cleave to its depths, and for wishing that there were such beings as mermaids, and that you could dwell among them and be satisfied with a fish diet for the rest of your existence.

Altogether it is a very enjoyable day for those who can afford to humour the weather, and who, by so doing, can turn it to pleasant and even profitable account. But it is a bad time for energetic, conscientious folk, for those who *must* work, for practical go-ahead people, who have no mercy upon themselves, and have no mercy upon their *employées*—some of them not quite so stubborn as their masters.

Yes, it is a charming day; but, somehow or another, in my present mood I would willingly exchange it for one of fog or snow, or wind or rain. When we are in a bad humour ourselves, cheerfulness in the rest of the world is almost intolerable.

Ah, they have arrived at last.

I hear the carriage coming up the drive. It is the runaways without doubt.

Sweet, innocent pair! No, even now, I cannot harbour a thought against Ella.

Well, my pretty pets, I am afraid I shall be obliged to wound the happiness at least of one of you.

No, this is spite. Much as I hate Harry, and hate him, brother of mine though he be, I do most cordially, I trust I am not capable of petty meanness.

\* \* \* \* \*

We met.

I laid my hand on his shoulder.

"Harry," I said, "I want to speak to you."

"What is it, old fellow?" he returned, uneasily.

"Will you come into the library?"

"Won't here do as well?"

"No, I am afraid not," I answered; "what I have to say must be said in private."

He followed me silently into the dark, fusty-smelling room. I shut the door behind him, and turned the key.

He glanced at me inquiringly and suspiciously. He went and

stood near one of the windows, with his face half hidden by the red curtains.

"You are married?" I began.

"Yes," he replied, hesitatingly, as though he wondered why I asked the question, and suspected a pitfall.

"To Ella Cheston?"

"Yes," he answered, insolently; "not a doubt about it."

"Who is Lucy Clements?"

He looked at me fixedly, but never moved a muscle of his face. But a lump seemed to rise and fall in his throat, and when he spoke his voice was dry and husky.

"Lucy Clements?" he murmured.

"Yes."

"How should I know?" he returned, hastily and doggedly.

"I daresay you know nothing at all about her," I said, quietly; "but still I had an idea that you might be able to enlighten me."

"Oh," he rejoined, as if somewhat relieved, though a good deal mystified:

"I met a person of that name a few days ago."

He sat down, with his elbow on the table, and with his chin resting against the palm of his hand. The disengaged hand he laid with an air of forced composure on Sir Francis' great bulging blotting book. It trembled, and he turned slightly pale. He eyed me fixedly, and seemed to draw in his breath.

"I had some conversation with her a little while ago," I continued, "and in the course of it your name cropped up curiously enough."

Harry said nothing, but sat staring at me with all his might.

"Perhaps you can explain *this*," I said, and rather viciously threw the copy of a marriage certificate on the table.

He started back, and turned as white as a ghost. Then, without saying a word, he took the paper up and eyed it with a blank amazed look, as if he were thoroughly confounded and had no notion at all what to say next.

"Oh—*this*?" he presently stammered, hoarsely.

"Yes—that," I returned; "it is at least a curious coincidence, is it not?"

His lips moved, but he said nothing.

"It looks awkward," I resumed, pleasantly. "I came down here to have it explained."

"Explained—*what* explained?" he said, as if he only half understood me.

"You can read?"

"Of course."

"Well, the name there and your name?"

He started as if suddenly stung, and then took up the paper once more with a trembling hand. He eyed it vacantly, as if he were reading it over and over again without being able to fix any meaning to the words.

I was convinced now that all my suspicions were realized, but Harry looked so utterly forlorn that it was impossible not to pity him.

He made a ghastly attempt to smile.

"A take in," he suggested, in a half-stifled whisper; "a hoax."

"Nothing of the kind," I answered, growing malicious again.

"Who can prove it?" he muttered, almost mechanically.

Then he paused for a moment, and seemed quite at a loss.

But he still kept staring at the paper, and swayed it to and fro between his finger and thumb, as if it fascinated him and shut out of sight worse things on which he had not the courage to look.

I sat down near him, and lightly touched his arm.

He never moved.

"Harry," I said, "I am sorry for you. Probably I suspect as much as you can tell me, but for your own sake you had better not admit anything. I am willing to hope there is a mystery which can be cleared up. I will try, for your sake—for though I don't love you, you are my brother—and for Sir Francis' sake, to hope the best. But it is a very strong case against you, you must admit that."

"So help me Heaven," burst in Harry, but I motioned him silent, and continued.

"Clear it up if you can without delay. If you can't"—

"If I can't?" cried Harry eagerly.

"But I am trying to believe that you can," I answered significantly. "It seems incredible—"

"Oh! you are a good fellow, Dick," broke in my brother vehemently. "You are a good fellow, and I have not deserved it. I have not treated you at all well, but I will change all that, by Jove I will. If you only knew how I have been badgered. If you only knew what a duffer I am in reality. If you only knew what a fool they have all made of me. I have not been to blame—at least not much—indeed I have not. They wanted my money; it was all a trick. Oh! you must not desert me, you are my brother you know. Members of families ought to stand by one another. I'll do as much for you one of these days. I will run up to town immediately, by Jove I will, nobody will be a bit the wiser. Give me time and I'll set it all right. Think of Ella"—



"Harry," I interposed calmly, "don't drag *her* name into the discussion. I don't want to lose my temper. You have never loved me, I know that, and I have never loved you—"

"No, now don't bully," said my brother, holding up his hands and looking as if he thought I were going to do him some grievous bodily harm.

I laughed, but, perhaps, not pleasantly.

"Look here, Harry," I resumed, "we were always in opposition, and of course you tried your best on every occasion to thwart me. And you generally succeeded. First you supplanted me with Sir Francis, and then with—well you know whom I mean. You may be sure that I don't love you now any more than I used to. It would be rude to call you a scamp, but your cleverness is of a two-edged kind, and is apt to get you into scrapes. As for your courage and sense of honour—well, we will say nothing about either. No, now don't get excited. I believe, as you say, that you have been badgered and bullied. Badgered and bullied notably, not once but twice. You have entangled yourself on two occasions, and you have had to deal with people who, having once got hold of you, would not let you go. I suppose you are one of those persons who always find the present difficulty the greatest. You are not able to make up your mind on an emergency. You do wrong knowing it to be wrong, and because you are afraid to do anything else, but, like all timid people, you trust that something will turn up, and that you will be able sooner or later to give your misfortunes, as I suppose you call them, the go-by. Well this is poor policy as you must have found out by this time. I dislike you intensely, as you must be pretty well aware, but for various reasons, I don't choose to constitute myself an informer. Oh! you need not thank me. It is not for your sake, but for your wife's, that I choose to hold my tongue. I believe Ella to be a faithless, dishonest woman, but I loved her more than a fellow like you can conceive, and I should never forgive myself if any harm were to happen to her that it had been in my power to prevent. Thank your wife then for my choosing to forget this little peccadillo of yours, at all events till I am *compelled* to come forward. I think it extremely probable that you will be found out and exposed in a few days, or at least weeks, but I shall not myself move a finger in the matter. On the contrary, I promise you to do all that I can to quiet such suspicions as have already got abroad. It is an utter puzzle to me how you could ever have been such a fool; it is still a greater puzzle how, having been a fool, you could have gone on still further, and have become a villain. You must have been miserably humbugged, or you must have been frightened out of your wits, for if any one has gained anything by these

transactions it is certainly not you. However, I don't care to argue these questions now. If you are a man with the least grain of sense, you will take the best precautions you can to keep matters quiet and to prevent a painful *exposé*. Of course you know the legal consequences of bigamy; I need not enlarge on that point. I shall keep my mouth shut, and will even try to throw suspicion on a false scent. It will be a difficult job believe me, and I am ashamed of myself for making such a promise, but when I think—Oh! Harry, dear boy, you must not think me unchristian, but I am half inclined to kick you out of doors."

"I know things look very bad," said Harry meekly, "and I am sure it is very kind of you, and if ever I could return the favour"—

"I hope you will never attempt to do anything of the sort," I returned arrogantly. "I cannot conceive a greater humiliation for me than to be indebted to you for a kindness."

My brother lifted his head, and there was a vicious gleam in his eye as I said this. But he drooped again the next moment, and to my surprise burst into a torrent of tears.

"Oh! I am a miserable devil," he cried, "you are so hard upon me, and I thought to-day to be so happy. You ought not to come down on a fellow like this. You have not heard the other side yet. I know you have never liked me, though I am sure I don't know why. I think some day or other you will be sorry for what you have said. Oh! I am a miserable dog. I am always trying to please people, and I get into scrape after scrape, and nobody pities me. They all turn against me one after the other."

"Good Heavens, Harry," I said, "stop this ridiculous whimpering. I daresay you are a very ill-used mortal, but you are not quite a baby."

"Yes, you have no pity," he continued, "I know that nobody pities me; nobody cares a rap for me; I am a miserable idiot, and I wish I was dead and that it was all over."

"When you have done," I ventured to suggest, "it would be as well, perhaps, to adjourn the meeting."

"Ah, you may jeer," returned Harry, "but you don't know how I feel. I am mad; I shall do something desperate. You go on goading me—goading me. Take care," he added, suddenly raising his head and throwing a spiteful glance at me, "even a worm can turn." Then he again bowed his face on his hands, and was once more lost in grief. "I did not mean it, I did not mean it," he sobbed; "forgive me; I am an ungrateful beast. I am half out of my mind, and don't know what I am saying."

At this moment there was a gentle tap at the door.

"What are you two old fogies about in there?" said a voice which I recognised as Ella's.

"Come, Harry, cheer up," I said, "here is your lady love; dry your eyes and do the gallant."

He rose sullenly, dabbed his face with his pocket-handkerchief, and stretched himself as if he felt relieved.

I opened the door and stepped out into the passage.

"Oh, Mr. Richard," began Ella turning her great black eyes upon me and laughing mischievously, "what *have* you two conspirators been hatching in secret? By-the-bye I suppose I must not call you Mr. Dick, it would seem so odd now that I am no longer a silly addlepated girl, but a staid married woman. Besides you have a way at times of looking at me that makes me feel quite uncomfortable. I declare you are more solemn and mysterious than ever. Why is it, Mr. Darlington," she continued, as if innocently propounding a question that had long puzzled her, "that you always talk like one of those big useful books that used to frighten me so at school? I doubt whether I ever exactly understood you; do you think I did? By-the-bye have you persuaded Sir Francis and Miss Mary to forgive Harry and poor me? I fancy so, though both of the good dears look delightfully vexed. I am *so* much obliged to you for all the pains you have taken. Ah, now I see you are angry. No, you mustn't, I didn't mean anything; it was only my fun, I am such a tease. Harry and you have been plotting mischief; I shall find it all out by-and-bye, trust me for that. Mine is a dear, good, obedient little husband, and he would not be offended even if he *heard* me say that I can wind him round my finger. I shall thwart you, deep diplomatist that you are, so I give you fair warning. What, going away already? Oh, no don't; I made sure you would stay till to-morrow. We shall all miss you so. Fancy poor me and those two great dragons glaring at me. Oh, it is cruel; but that naughty boy of mine must take care of me. By-the-bye, Mr. Dick—*may* I call you Mr. Dick?—let me whisper a wee little word of advice to you. You will be thinking of a wife soon. No, now you mustn't frown; I won't allow it. Listen like a good child. You don't understand us young ladies. You are very clever with your dry books, but you are not—a man of the world; isn't that the term? Well, take an old woman's advice. You want polishing up dreadfully. You are so bashful; why, I have actually seen you blush! Fancy anyone blushing in these days! Now we giddy misses like to be coaxed and petted, and spoiled. We like our slaves to express their humiliation in words as well as to look languishing, because after a time you know that sort of thing becomes boring. We like the silly deluded creatures to



behave as if they thought we were worth fighting for, and I am quite sure you will agree with me that no love-sick swain deserves his fair—dear me how poetical I am—unless he positively moves heaven and earth to wheedle her into letting drop that naughty word ‘yes.’ We admire pluck, and like the man who won’t take ‘no,’ but comes up to the charge again and again, and teases us into consenting in spite of ourselves. You think me very forward, don’t you? Well, so I am, but I speak for your good. I never professed to be a bread and butter miss, and *must* say out what I think. I hate decorum; and one day, when my hints are useful to you, you will really be thankful. Do you imagine I don’t know your secret? You fancied yourself in love with me; but frankly you had not money enough, and what is more, though you are a very good fellow in your way, you are not my style. Why should we mince matters? I must giggle and look innocent when the old fogies are by, but I shall say and do as I please in private. I don’t like your glum face, and no other woman will like it, I can assure you of that. If you want to catch a girl worth having be a man; none of us want ninnies. Rubbish about propriety. Ladylike behaviour? I am not a lady, I am an apothecary’s daughter. You thought me a pretty innocent chick, did you? Well, you were mistaken. I am not a fool, I will tell you that much. If you come between me and my husband you will meet your match. If you like to visit us here now and then do so by all means; you will be as welcome as most people. Oh, I shall hold my ground, no fear of that. But no mischief, mind; and please empty your head of all those silly, romantic notions about sylph-like Ella, and so on. I am a woman, not a baby, and a woman of the world. I have spoken plainly enough, I think, even for you. We understand each other exactly now. There will be no need for explanations in the future. Thanks for your patience, I have enjoyed shocking you amazingly. Whenever you want to be tormented run down here; there is something in the expression of your face that always makes me vicious. Harry, you little wretch, come and escort your liege lady and mistress into the garden.”

“Eugh,” I heard her mutter as I turned and descended the steps, “you muddle-headed bookworm, to think you should ever have dared to try to entrap *me*. I am only a penniless doctor’s daughter, but you can’t think how I hate and despise you.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RICHARD DARLINGTON ENDED.

I RETURNED to town.

As I walked from the house through the Park I felt stupid and dizzy. I tried to collect my thoughts, but in vain. There was a rushing noise in my ears, and as I hurried along I had a fantastic idea that somehow or another I was outside my ordinary self. I moved rapidly, mechanically, and without sense of effort, as we do in a dream. I seemed to be apart from my own body, and to be looking down at it as at a comparative stranger. I felt somewhat as though I were a machine that had been set in motion by some impulse of which it was impossible now to resist the acquired force. I had a confused impression of being surrounded by trees and thick foliage, and of every now and then passing a gate or a cottage, or over a bridge, but I observed nothing distinctly. I had a perception of mass, but none of detail; everything about me was vague and unsubstantial as a dream. I endured no sharp pang of jealousy or rage or self-reproach, but I felt as if I were in part paralysed. It seemed as though something, which had by degrees become interwoven with my very being, had suddenly been wrenched away—as if half my soul were wanting.

By degrees, however, I began to recover my self-command. I brought reason to my aid, and tried to argue myself into the belief that all that had happened was for the best. Indeed, I had cause to be thankful, but it was too early as yet to see that which had occurred in any other light than as a disgrace and a disaster. However, I succeeded in part. I became less insensible to what was happening around me, and felt that it would be absurd and lamentable weakness to yield to my emotions altogether.

I arrived soon at the highly sensible conclusion that I had escaped a pitfall, and that a little mortification in the present was better than flattered vanity and wretchedness for life. I took my hat off, noticed that it was untidy, and brushed it. One or two indifferent jokes, that I had heard a long while ago, strangely enough occurred to me, and I laughed at them more than I had ever done before. I fancied myself a philosopher; I was merely hysterical. Before I reached the station I began to hum an opera air. But I stopped suddenly—it was a favourite of Ella's. A

strange, sharp pang darted through my heart. I was humbled and silent.

The small bustle and slight activity of the country railway station served to restore me. Besides, some of the officials recognised me, and touched their caps. It would be ridiculous to allow my grief to be seen by strangers. I affected rather a brisker humour than usual.

There was a white-haired old clergyman in the train, and we chatted pleasantly together on many topics. I laughed more than once. But I noticed that, whenever I laughed, he glanced at me with an expression half puzzled, half compassionate. This annoyed me at first, but I soon recovered my good humour.

I was astonished at my self-possession, and rather proud of it. But still I felt that there might be a time when all that had happened would be brought more home to me than had been the case hitherto. I remembered having been told that after a severe bodily injury, it is some while before you experience the full intensity of the pain. I wondered whether I was really unimpressible, or only stunned. Was it strength of mind, or numbness of mind, that saved me from suffering?

As I talked, there kept recurring to me an absurd and feverish idea that I was asleep and dreaming, that I should awake presently and find myself in my chambers. I was outwardly calm, and my spirits had greater activity than usual. Though in general reserved, I experienced no sense of restraint, and enjoyed a rapid flow of ideas and a sense of the ludicrous that perhaps made me an amusing companion. Granting this were so, I was amusing for the first time in my life. Usually, I am a plague to myself, and a burden to the company in which I am cast. Try as I will, it is seldom that I can conquer my shyness.

I reached town and walked—I was too excited to sit quiet in an omnibus—to my chambers. From thence, having hastily swallowed a cup of tea and made a vain attempt to eat some bread which nearly choked me, I hurried, on the impulse of the moment, to Little Cator Street. I felt that it would be better if I deferred my visit till the next day, but I could not rest, and I was glad of any pretext for exertion. I have always found bodily exercise the most effectual of all remedies for the cure of mental restlessness.

A quarter of an hour's sharp walking brought me to my journey's end. I rang the bell. It was answered by the old lady in person. I saw, by the expression of her face, that something had gone wrong. She signed for me to follow her into the parlour, which happened to be empty. She sank into an arm-chair, but for some time was too agitated to speak plainly. At



last she exclaimed, "Gone, sir!—gone! It was last evening. I returned from my shopping, and the room was empty. God forgive me! I suspected foul play at first; but, oh, it was not that. Poor thing! She had been wild and excited like all day. I little fancied what it would lead to. There was no one in the house at the time she went but my girl—that chit of a thing you saw the other night, sir; she heard the door slam, but thought nothing of it, which she didn't ought to have done, seeing she knew I was out and the lodgers all away. When I came back and found what had happened, I set to work and questioned everyone I could think of, even the policeman on the 'beat', who knows me well, but none of them could tell me anything. At last I hurried off to your chambers, sir, but the gate was locked and the man was asleep, and when he awoke he grumbled and said it was very late, and wouldn't it keep till to-morrow, and assured me positive you had left and gone away into the country, and though I only half believed him, I came back and made up my mind I would see you the first thing in the morning. It was seven o'clock when I called, and I hammered and hammered and got no answer. And then I inquired of a gentleman who lives in the room below, and he told me that what the man said was quite true; he was most polite, and asked me would I leave a message. But, I thought to myself, a secret is a secret—the least said the soonest mended. So I came away. But oh, sir, the worst part of my story is to be told. Ah! that poor young thing! God forgive her, and me too, for suspecting her as I did. As I went down by the police-station, for I wanted to see Richards, who lives over the bridge, I caught sight of a great printed paper posted up with 'Found Drowned' in big letters at the top of it. It struck me all of a heap. An awful thought occurred to me; 'and yet,' says I, 'no—it's impossible.' But I was restless and fidgety, and something within me wouldn't be quieted, and at last—just to satisfy myself, for I tried hard to believe it could not be—I went up and read it. Oh! the poor, dear thing! You can't reproach me, sir, more than I did myself; but I assure you, upon my bended knee I do, it was no fault of mine. I would give a year of my own life to know that it was a mistake, and that she is alive and well, just as I saw her yesterday morning."

The good woman ceased speaking, and handed me a paper. I unfolded it. It was a copy of the one she had mentioned. It contained an exact description of Lucy Clements. She had thrown herself from Waterloo Bridge, within five minutes to twelve, on the night before my departure. She had been picked up out of the river quite dead. "A mere girl," said the paper, "some nineteen years of age, and bearing the marks of privation."

Not so very long ago she had been a trustful, loving, innocent girl. After that she became a "creature." A month or two later she was a vagabond being "moved on" by the police. A few days more and she was a corpse—a thing for a deadhouse!—a thing to be talked about by gossips over their Sunday pipes and beer and newspaper. Oh, that old, old story, of which every week in London might safely promise that it should be "continued in its next."

This Lucy Clements, of whom, my fastidious reader, for some time you will hear no more, was a creature so powerless, and so wronged, that it would be a sort of blasphemy against Heaven to accord her any pity. However, let the world say what it will, she is beyond the reach of its sneers. She is at peace, in the bosom of her Father. Betrayers cannot torment her now, neither can policemen. She was a baggage—a baggage like that reprobate who anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped them with the hairs of her head. She was a creature so weak and silly and confiding, that it was a noble and manly act to compass her ruin.

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## BOOK II.

### CHAPTER I.

YEARS have passed, but they have not affected Ella. She sets time at defiance and looks as charming as on the day of her marriage. There is not a wrinkle on her forehead, not a suggestion of care anywhere on her fresh, wholesome face. She has her old wicked smile, and her dark flashing eyes still brim over with fun tempered not unpleasantly as some think with just the merest dash in the world of malice. She sits at the breakfast table in a light morning gown, crisp and rustling, but not prudishly stiff. Her plump, white hands, ornamented with rings, are folded demurely on the snowy table-cloth and are not shamed by the comparison. She wears a rose, yet sparkling with dew, on her bosom, and her glossy black hair is plaited into a solid, unpretending knot at the back of her head. Her small arched feet, set in the dapperest of little black slippers, ornamented with gold buckles and a frill of cherry-coloured ribbon, rest, nestling one against the other, on the softest and chubbiest of hassocks. As she eyes her husband a smile plays over her lips. No doubt charming and possibly affectionate, it is yet not without a certain element of scorn. She is the dearest little woman in the world, sleek and placid—here that ancient simile of the cat suggests itself, but I have a horror of barefaced plagiarism, and refrain.

"Harry, Pet," she began in a voice sweet as a distant chime on a still summer evening.

"Yes, Ella."

"I have been thinking."

She glanced down at those pretty little hands of hers and seemed inclined to purr.

Harry, apparently not in the best of tempers, kept his eyes fixed on his plate, and in a gruff yet by no means commanding tone asked "About what?"

"To-day," resumed Ella in the same silvery accents, and eyeing her husband with a glance half playful, half vindictive, "is the third of August. On the first of August, I am really ashamed to say how many years ago, for I should seem quite an old woman, we were married."

"Well," returned Harry gloomily, "we have celebrated the joyful occasion once this year; surely you don't want us to do so again."

"No, my sweet pet, certainly not," replied Ella with her charming smile, "I agree with you that once a year for nonsense of that sort is quite enough, but I have been dreaming of old times, and I have been counting up on my fingers all the strange things that have happened since you and I, my most delightful of old hubbies, were joined together for better or worse in that fusty little church overlooking the sea. I dare say you regret the bargain. I don't; yet I can't help thinking sometimes what would have happened had I been silly and romantic enough to marry that dear old bookworm of a Dick—by no means a bright creature, without much idea of making himself amusing, but capable of being improved, and certainly not such a mean-spirited little hound as my own duck of a Harry."

"You are complimentary," returned the master of the house in the careless tone of a man inured to insults.

Ella went on with a frank, winning smile, as if nobody had spoken.

"As I say, I might have had that grotesque, awkward brother of yours. Perhaps he would have bored me, but I think he would have loved me, and he might have seen my value, which is more than you can do. I could have twisted him round my finger—however I can do that with my Pettums, so we will not quarrel on the score of obedience. I am not sure that he was without brains, and we might have put our heads together for our mutual advantage. But it would have been slow work. I wanted money and position at once, not by the time I should be an old woman. Very mercenary, was it not? but many another girl before me has married for 'an establishment' as the term is,



and you have the advantage of possessing a wife who is not ashamed of owning the truth."

"I will tell you what it is," growled Harry, and then he checked himself and looked dangerous.

Ella went on as if unconscious of an interruption.

"I met you one day when I came to Culverton with deliciously unsuspecting old Marwood, who always used to think me another sort of baby in long clothes, and I did not dislike the look of you. You were a very handsome little fellow—I don't mind telling you so—and you dressed well and had pleasant manners. At all events, you knew how to make yourself agreeable. I could see that you were mean and selfish, and I suspected that you were a coward, but that was all the better for my purpose. I married you on spec.—what a vulgar term by the bye—but a little bird told me the truth when it said that Sir Francis couldn't last for ever, and that I should soon be my lady and have the disposal of your money. And let me add, sweet pet, that it could not be in better hands. Well, I might have done better, and certainly I might have done worse, but I had too much good sense to be the victim of extravagant ambition, and I had not much time at my disposal, so I closed with the bargain."

Ella sighed, and toyed with a bit of toast.

Her husband seemed impatient.

"As I said before," she continued, "you were at that time a handsome young fellow, and handsome young fellows are a set of creatures for whom I have always had a fancy. I could not help being amused at the way Dick used to persecute me. What an odd fellow that brother of yours was to be sure. And he is ruined you say? Well, I pity the poor wretch, and when I have gossiped myself tired, I mean you to tell me all about him. Fancy an eligible suitor sitting in your room by the hour and never saying a word, staring at you with all his eyes, hoarsely choking up some imbecile remark now and then, and growing hot and cold by turns. It was really too absurd; sometimes I could hardly help laughing. But Dick, though a boor, was a man; he meant more than he said, and if the money had been on his side I am afraid you would have stood a poor chance. Do you recollect how I bullied you till you promised to make a runaway match? You fancied you were in love, but you silly boy, you were only infatuated. I think, though, you were a little afraid of me, even then. What on earth could have induced you to marry a girl without a sixpence? I suppose you thought you could afford to do so. It is a thing no man can afford to do, take my word for it. If you want a woman to love you, put yourself under an obligation to her. The more she thinks you are try-

ing to buy her affections the less is she disposed to part with them. This sounds a ridiculous and romantic doctrine, does it not? but it holds good even with the worst of us. I daresay the beggar girl had the highest respect for Cophetua, or perhaps she thought him a fool for allowing himself to be so easily taken in. She may have loved him, but I doubt it. I am sure she would have liked him all the better if he had been one of her own set. There are not many women who can submit to be under a perpetual obligation to their husbands. We like a man that we can pet and tease and patronize, who sometimes turns restive and tries to bully us, and on whom we can retaliate by reproaching him with his meanness and ingratitude."

"You seem talkative this morning," interrupted Harry with an air that he meant to be sardonic.

Ella, gently patting the back of one hand with the fingers of the other, continued as before.

"My Harry was a good boy for once in his life, and had the sense to do what I told him. He knew that I was an adventuress, or else he was a fool, and he was perfectly aware that if our matrimonial project came to the ears of dear old Sir Francis or languid Aunt Mary, or even silly, conscientious old Marwood, a grand explosion would be the result. So as he wanted me, and was not in the habit of foregoing his whims, out of respect to future consequences, still less for propriety's sake, and as he was afraid of a family squabble and indignant parents, and afraid of me too, he did the least disagreeable thing possible under the circumstances—trusted entirely to the discretion of his lady-love. A most gallant proceeding. It would be a good thing for naughty greedy little sirens like myself if all young persons of property were similarly manageable. Let me see; was it not about this time that I paid a visit to Bath? I fancy so; and it was just a fortnight afterwards that I went to Cragstock. I recollect those two old frumps who called themselves my maternal aunts—what capital advice they gave me, by-the-bye, about my future career, so different as they pictured it to the neat little scheme that I had already mapped out for myself. And then I have a vague notion of meeting, quite accidentally, of course, my sweet little Harry behind the weatherbeaten wall of the old church on the cliff, where he had come like a good boy according to orders, and next day when it was quite early—but you know all the rest."

"I will tell you what," again burst in Harry, but again he checked himself, and though his eyes gleamed viciously he said nothing.

Ella the imperturbable resumed her narrative as though it were a soliloquy.

"It was a wicked thing to do," she continued, "but directly everything was safe I could not resist writing to poor Dick, and indulging in a little mild chaff. I dare say he was dreadfully cut up; he was just the fellow to fret and fume at being prevented from throwing himself head foremost into a matrimonial horse-pond; but I could not help it. I was in such good spirits I felt that I must plague somebody or another, and to quarrel with your husband on your wedding-day would have been rather too much even for cynical poor me. Do you recollect our journey to Culverton, and how you could not rest a moment and could not eat and could not settle down to anything? It is rather a humiliating but of course a very convenient thing to have a coward—or shall I say a nervous subject?—for a husband, and as I sat and watched you I felt degraded and pleased at the same time. Do you remember our being shown into the drawing-room, and my going down on my knees to Sir Francis and then bursting out laughing? The old boy—forgive any implied disrespect to your late worthy father—was terribly disconcerted, but I brought him round in time. At last he always kissed me when I went down in the morning, and I really believe the poor old gentleman fancied he had made an impression on my guileless young heart, in an innocent way of course."

"Ella!" burst in her husband.

"Aunt Mary was not so easy to manage," continued the fair tormentor, "but she was silly as well as spiteful, and I soon got her under my thumb and kept her there. Fancy her trying to sneer me down. Two can play at that game; it is a dangerous one for people who can't keep their tempers. I flatter myself Aunt Mary found out as much to her cost."

Harry bit his lip impatiently, turned his chair from the table, and became lost in contemplation of the fireplace.

Ella watched him silently for a moment, and then indulged in a little ringing laugh; it was silvery but malicious.

"My poor boy is losing his temper," she said; "keep it, for I have not nearly done with you yet."

Harry rose and made a motion as if to leave the room.

"Dare to, you little wretch," cried his wife, and her eyes flashed fire. But in a moment she recovered her temper with a laugh, glanced down at those small plump hands of hers, and resumed the conversation.

"I have done with ridiculous you and me," she said. "So Dick is ruined. Tell me all about it."

Harry drew a letter from his coat pocket, and tossed it across the table.



Ella took it up, read it, and began to think. "Are you going to do what he asks?" she inquired.

"I must," returned her husband.

"Must," repeated Ella, after a pause; "Harry, you are keeping something back from me; what is it?"

"I would rather not tell you," growled the Baronet, "that is I had better not. I suppose I may have my secrets as well as other people, and you would gain nothing by knowing this one. All that I can tell you at present is that I am under an obligation to that beast—you can guess who I mean. No, now don't press me. When I say no I mean no. I can be as obstinate as you are yourself."

"Harry," said his wife quietly, "there is no need for you to put yourself in a passion. Keep your secret and welcome, I shall find it out if ever I want to, depend upon that. I fancied you knew by this time that my brains were stronger than yours. Whatever corner you may have been driven into by Master Dick, I think I could safely promise you a speedy release. However, let us change the subject."

Five minutes passed without a word. Then Lady Darlington said tranquilly, "My pet, dutifully hand your lady love the newspapers."

Harry did as commanded with a tolerable grace. He was not himself interested in politics, so he sat staring at the empty stove till he was roused by a silvery little laugh from his wife.

"Harry," said Lady Darlington, "enjoy the honour of seeing your name in print, and that in the columns of a paper that is either the biggest in the world or with the largest circulation of any known journal—I forget which. No; now sit down, you bad boy," she continued, as he rose and moved towards her; "go back to your arm-chair this minute."

Harry did as commanded. His wife settled herself comfortably, doubled up the newspaper to her satisfaction, and then began:—

"There is the country, and there is the country; the rural districts of the Poet, and the rural districts, less attractive, of stern reality and of the Blue Books. On this side of the page *couleur de rose*, on that—but stop; let us proceed according to established forms. Sing muse! The unproved pleasures free of the slow-faced swain. He, uncorrupted by the luxuries of great cities, and supporting a wife and five children on ten shillings a-week, habitually rises early enough to hear the 'shrill clarion of the cock,' or 'the hounds and horn cheerily rousing the slumbering morn.' 'Zephyr is with Aurora playing,' as Joe Yokel 'whistles o'er the furrowed land,' till at length fatigued he sits him

down, 'maybe betwixt two aged oaks,' and primitive in his tastes nor craving the art of 'deleterious French cooks,' derives plain nutriment from the 'savoury meal of herbs and other country messes which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses.' We shall not now enlarge on rural delights in the shape of croquet parties and their jealousies, or picnics and their forgotten corkscrews; we shall not concern ourselves with 'the sweet sounds of languid nature,' the lullaby of the leaves or the ripple of the waters; we shall say nothing of the 'youths and maidens coy' dancing 'in the chequered shade;' we can but allude to the rustic charms of the 'milkmaid singing blithe;' we would gladly linger, but must not, in 'the meadows trim with daisies pied,' watching 'the shallow brooks and rivers wide.' Everyone who knows anything at all about the country—as it ought to be—is prepared for such features as we have suggested as a matter of course; and no doubt, with the addition of a billiard table, the latest novel from Mudie's, and the society of nice girls, they are all very well as a change—say for a week or two.

"But alas! to every picture there is a dark side. Even the sweet, innocent country is not without its blemishes, and to judge from a little narrative that appears in another portion of our columns, these blemishes are sometimes of so serious a nature as to throw all the joys, real or imaginary, of the cockney poet eager to 'breathe the breath of the cowslip and primrose sweet' into the background. It appears that in a certain retired corner of our native land, there flourishes a stalwart baronet—hitherto unknown to fame—one Sir Henry Darlington, with whom, in the interests of the public and humanity, we shall, with or without his permission, take the liberty of 'plucking a crow.'

"Is it true, we beg to inquire, that on this gentleman's estate a wretched man, one Thomas Jarvis, aged seventy-six, has lately *died of starvation*? It would be difficult, we apprehend, to deny the circumstances in the face of the verdict returned at the coroner's inquest. We ask, with amazement and horror,—'In this nineteenth century of ours, can such things be?' Alas! stubborn truth not only answers in the affirmative, but should any lingering doubts remain, supplies us with particulars of the most harrowing description. We see the miserable hut, with its mud floor and tumble-down roof. We picture to ourselves the miserable old man, proud even in his extremity, disdaining to beg and resolute to escape the degradation of the 'parish.' He sinks day by day—untended, unpitied. He has worked on that estate for the last thirty years, and yet he is not missed, his absence excites no remark; steady, sober, industrious, he is left to die like a rat in a hole. At length his son appears on the scene.

Almost as a boy he had quitted the guileless solitude of the country in despair. He saw nothing but starvation and shame before him, and like many another desperate lad, he forced his way to London, full of vague notions of the money to be earned, and the consequence to be acquired, in a city of which he had been told that its very streets were paved with gold. But misfortune followed hard on his track. Crushed and disheartened he emigrates, and it is not until after years of privation that his energy meets its reward. He has not, however, in the meanwhile forgotten his aged father. Competence within his grasp, he at once hastens home, to find—what? The parent, whom he had so loved, dead of starvation; to hear twelve honest Englishmen record a deliberate verdict that the father, for whom he had struggled, had perished ‘from want of the common necessities of life.’

“Sir Henry Darlington may have explanations to offer. We would gladly hear them. It is a blot on the humanity of any landowner that a poor old man should perish of hunger within a mile and a half of his ancestral home. Does the worthy baronet we have named ever trouble himself, we would ask, to inquire into the condition of those whose lot is cast upon his estate? Does he recognise that he has duties as well as privileges, that he and his associates of the landed interest are not merely *fruges consumere nati*? Can he listen to such a verdict as the one we have recorded without the utmost remorse and self-reproach? It may be urged that he has many and important engagements, that he cannot spend his time in searching for distress, though he may be ready enough to relieve it when found. True, but it is his bounden duty to take such precautions that horrors of the Culverton type shall be impossible in the favoured nook of merry England over which he presides. A landowner is not merely a recipient and dispenser of moneys; he is morally, if not legally, bound to do his best to secure the welfare of those committed to his charge; he is not expected to be generous beyond his means—no one asks or even wishes him to dispense the prodigal relief that helped to enervate and impoverish the country under the old monastic system, but at least it is his duty to make himself acquainted with the real condition of those who toil, and who for years have toiled on his estate; at least he is bound to take care that no man, however old, helpless, and forgotten, shall be allowed to fall from his post of duty unnoticed, or—to adopt the terms of the verdict we have quoted—to perish in the midst of abundance ‘from want of the common necessities of life.’”

“What do you think of that, my pet?” said Ella.



Harry muttered an evil word, and again kicked the fender, half-peevisly, half-vindictively.

"The newspaper people are very tiresome, are they not?" resumed his wife tranquilly. "I should not care to die of starvation myself, and of course *you* wouldn't; still, that is no reason why the world in general should complain of the process. By-the-bye, Harry dear, they talk of your 'engagements,' what *can* they mean? But I suppose I shall know when you favour us with your public apology."

The "stalwart baronet" knitted his brows. He was afraid of his wife, and he hated her; he muttered something under his breath, so uncomplimentary, that we really could not transfer it to paper.

Ella rose and walked to the window. She stood there leaning against the wainscot, and her gaze wandered out over the landscape.

"Harry," she said, "I am not a philanthropic person, as you know. I have seen rather too much of the world to care particularly for the woes of people whom you can't possibly understand, to whom you are yourself a puzzle, and whose principal aim in life seems to be to get to the weak side of you. However, if I were in your place, I shouldn't exactly care to have it said of me that a miserable old man had died within a mile-and-a-half of my own dining-room door 'from want of the common necessities of life!' I am not fond of the poor, but I don't exactly hate them. Like you, I am selfish, and neither of us cares to take more trouble than is absolutely necessary, but there ought to be a certain limit to laziness and incompetency even in a baronet. A man of your position in the county ought, for decency's sake, to show some little interest in his own affairs, and he ought at least to be able to prevent the occurrence of horrid scandals. It is really too bad that one should be disgraced by these absurd newspaper paragraphs and impudent allusions; we shall have our 'own correspondent' down here next, to report on the state of the village. You must take a high moral tone, and write indignantly to the papers at once, or wherever we go we shall be pointed out as a couple of ghouls. Stop, I will tell you what to say."

"It is all very well," grumbled Harry, "your talking as you do, but you were as much to blame as I was. *You* were supposed to be the lady bountiful; it is the wife's duty, not the husband's, to be poking about in farm-houses and cottages."

"We won't squabble, Harry pet," returned his wife, quietly; "the evil is done now, and all the snarls and sneers in the world can't undo it. Our best plan is to make excuses; but we mustn't be too humble. I am told the poor of Culverton regret the loss

of Sir Francis and your Aunt Mary. I daresay they do—but who ever heard of the poor being satisfied with the parties in possession? I am afraid, Harry, Nature made a mistake when she constituted you a landed proprietor; but it is only fair to the old lady to own that you would have been equally out of place in any other position. But what a fool I am; about this letter.”

“Yes,” said the baronet, “let us give up bickering, and get this Jarvis business off our hands as soon as possible; it has bothered us enough already.”

At this moment there was a tap at the door, and a maid-servant entered hesitatingly.

“What is it, Susan?” said Ella.

“If you please, ma’am,” returned the girl, “there is a person outside who wishes, he says, to speak to master very particularly, and I was to tell you, ma’am, his name is Jarvis.”

## CHAPTER II.

“I CAN’T see him,” said Harry, hastily.

But his wife crossed over to where he was sitting, laid her hand on his shoulder, and remonstrated with him. At length he was persuaded to recall his order.

“Show the man into the library,” he said; “I will see him in a moment.”

The visitor, a tall, clumsily-built young fellow, clothed in a decent, but badly-made, and singularly unbecoming suit of black, stood, as the baronet and his wife approached him, half-hidden in the shade of the thick red curtains that hung on each side of the deep-bayed window.

Sir Harry seemed undetermined how to act. Apparently he had a dim idea that to be affable and conciliatory was the wisest plan. But his face wore a troubled expression, and as he spoke his words faltered.

“Pray take a seat,” he said, with a feeble attempt at a smile; but Jarvis answered firmly, though respectfully—

“No thank you, Sir Harry, I feel that I must stand.”

Ella’s face darkened. She stood with one hand resting on the large table in the middle of the room, and eyed the intruder sternly.

The baronet placed himself close by her side, so that he could confer with his wife in a whisper.

“I daresay, Sir Harry,” began Jarvis, “you wonder why I have took the liberty of calling. You know what has happened—you know the sort of welcome home I have had—but maybe

you say to yourself, What have I got to do with this Jarvis, and what has he got to do with me, that he should come up here to remind me that his old father, whose name I hardly knew, died on my estate of starvation? Sir Harry, if you think as thus, I hope to answer your questions before I have ended what I have come out of my way to say to you. It is no small thing that would bring me to this house, Sir Harry, believe that. I am a man, though a very humble one compared to gentry such as you, and I have my loves and my hates, like my betters, and I don't mean no impertinence, but Culverton, and all belonging to it, is a sort of hell to me, and I wouldn't linger near this spot for a day, or an hour, longer save that I felt it to be my duty."

"If you come here merely to be insolent," said Ella, "you will find that we have an easy remedy against annoyance of that sort."

"You mistake me, milady," returned the man; "but no doubt I have expressed myself too freely; I hope you will pardon me, when you recollect the provocation I have had. However, it is not of my own sufferings, or of my poor father's, that I want to speak—I have taken upon me to say a word in behalf of some who are worse off than the cattle—though you may think they are happy enough—and who have no means of making their wants heard. I have taken on me to speak, so that Sir Harry may no longer be under any delusion, and so that his property may not be disgraced by other poor forgotten creatures perishing out of the way, as my own father did,"—the man's voice trembled, and he bowed his head—"without a friend near him, and that, too, in the midst of plenty."

Harry was about to speak, but Ella restrained him.

"I have risen in the world," continued Jarvis, "and by my own efforts. I come now to plead the cause of the class to which I once belonged. I don't want your charity—I want no man's—and if I seem to speak independently, please remember, Sir Harry, that I have lived in a land where the man with brains, and a strong right arm, and a big heart, is reckoned as good as anyone else. I have made my own way—I say it in all humility to Providence—and that without help from my superiors, or from any of my own set. I mean no insolence, but when conscience says to me, 'speak out plainly,' I will do so without undue respect to anyone. It is time that somebody should step forward and tell such as you, sir, how things really are. Perhaps I am in the wrong, but at all events I am in earnest, and I may be the means, through you, of bringing about much good. I wish I could put things politely. But I am a rude man, and I must ask you to excuse my deficiencies."



He paused, and Sir Harry drummed impatiently on the table with his fingers. Ella resignedly seated herself in a capacious arm-chair, and viewed the speaker with irritating calmness.

Jarvis, still standing, proceeded with his homily.

"You may not believe it, sir," he said, "but there is sore distress even now within a few yards of your own door. If you doubt my word, use your own eyes, and inquire for yourself. Look at the miserable tumbledown dens that you gentry call picturesque cottages. Look at the thin, starved women, and the sickly, stunted children that live in them, and then tell me if I lie. The labourer is a mere dog—so folk say—a being of another kind—a creature with no more soul than a pig—an animal that it would be a waste of time trying to improve, with no idea of helping himself, and who has lived in filth, and hunger, and wretchedness this many a year, till he is past cure—till he has come rather to like degradation, and contempt, and swinishness. So some have told me, and my answer is, when have you ever tried to raise him, what chance has he had, how can any man become reasonable, and hopeful, and well-to-do, on the wretched pittance the farmers deal out, and have the impudence to call wages?"

"Come, come, my man," interposed the baronet, "don't let your tongue run on too fast. I won't submit to insolence."

"I had no intention of giving any offence," answered Jarvis, quietly; "but you know the rate of pay in these parts, and I am sure facts are sufficient to justify me in speaking as I do."

Sir Harry was on the point of blurting out an angry rejoinder, when his wife touched his arm, and he restrained himself.

"I was saying, sir," resumed the unwelcome visitor, "that the labourer has been accused of not being an intelligent man. I put it to you both—to you, milady, and to your husband—would not the life he has to lead crush and degrade even those who think they can afford to despise him? But those who call him a hopeless brute, and want to keep him as he is, are not even consistent. The other day some of you gentry, sir, were discussing whether his children ought or ought not to be educated;\* and

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\* Some years have elapsed since Jarvis raised his solitary voice in behalf of the agricultural labourer, and it will be useful to compare his statements with the extremely complacent, not to say one-sided, view expressed by landed proprietors in the year of grace 1869. It is doubtful whether even now Dobbin could acquiesce so readily in his mode of life and prospects as can those whose interest it is to keep him out of the pale of civilized society. Let us, however, examine some of the statements of his unprejudiced friends, the employers of labour. It is not often that we have the advantage of hearing the country gentlemen speak up in behalf of progress and common sense. We quote from a report giving the proceedings of a quarterly meeting of the Devon Central Chamber of Agriculture, held at the Castle of Exeter, on Friday, April 18, 1869.

then, because an ignorant old chap, who had never even been taught to spell, shook his stupid head, and declared that education

"Mr. J. C. Moore Stevens *was not going to say* what he gave to his labourers, as that was between himself and them." . . . "He (the speaker) had to live, like other men. He had to invest his capital." . . . "With regard to education, he thought it should fit a man for *that position of life in which it had pleased God to place him.*" . . . "He had established schools in his own parish, and his principle of education was to *endeavour to fit the pupils for agricultural labourers.*" . . . "He had heard of trades' unions and strikes, but such things *never took place amongst agricultural labourers.*" . . . "He did not go about at public meetings advocating the cause of sending the peasantry abroad," etc., etc.

"Mr. Daw did not see what practical good would result from the discussion at all. Regarding education, he believed some people had gone education mad. *Why should labourers learn mathematics?*"

"Mr. Kennaway would confine education to those simple matters that were really useful to a farm labourer." And why, pray? Note the answer:—Because, "considering the early age at which children left school, there was no time for anything more."

"Mr. Risdon denied the truth of the statements so frequently published as to the miserable condition of agricultural labourers. Where *he* lived they were happy and contented." But, my dear Mr. Risdon, what has become of your logic? Does it follow that because prosperity exists in one place it must prevail in an equal degree everywhere else? "When he (Mr. R. aforesaid) had told one of his labourers that Government was going to prevent him from sending his young boys to work, the man said, 'I hope they will not do that, *for then I shall have to go to the parish.*' The young children," adds Mr. Risdon, "*earn from ninepence to one shilling a week in hoeing turnips.*" In the opinion of the speaker, the work "does them no harm: *it only trains them up in the way they should go.*" (Really these pious quotations are quite refreshing).

So we discover that it is a few pence—or, at most, a shilling or two—that stand between the prosperous agriculturalist and the workhouse. That is an admission worth having, at all events. What does it say for the reality of the happiness and content that we have been told so much of?

On a par with the foregoing is the rather inflated assertion of Mr. Kennaway, that if the condition of the agricultural labourer be set against that of the workman in towns, it will be found that if the rustic has smaller wages, he has many compensating advantages. And why not name them, Mr. Kennaway, instead of talking vaguely of "cottage accommodation," "garden," and the "healthy, pure air of the country?" In the first place, the agriculturalist almost invariably pays a rent for his cottage which, in nine cases out of ten, is a mere dilapidated hut, that the landlord will not go to the expense of repairing; and a sufficient set-off to the "healthy, pure air of the country," is to be found in a want of proper drainage, and the too-frequent mud floor beneath the level of the surrounding soil.

Earl Fortescue asks, in rather loose English, "When everybody has changed the calling of the agricultural labourer for something else 'wiser, happier, and better,' where is the bread to come from except from abroad?" ("Hear, hear," from the country gentlemen.) But surely this burst of protectionism is no argument against improving the labourer's condition! "They had to protest," continued the speaker, "against the universal restlessness and dissatisfaction with men's positions that prevailed. Against this restlessness and dissatisfaction the Chamber could not too strongly set its face." Accordingly we find a little way lower down those suggestive words "the resolution was carried."

In the face of such a fact, can we refuse any longer to recognise the truth of Canon Girdlestone's assertion, that these Chambers of Agriculture are "gigantic unions of landlord and tenant, in which their own claims and interests are represented, but never those of the industrious labourer?"

was not fit for such as he, and would be the spoiling of field-hands, you said triumphantly, ‘Talk about the labouring population not having proper instruction, why even the poor ground-down devils themselves tell us they think schooling a nuisance. In the same breath you declare that a man is little better than a beast, and yet that he is fit to decide on matters that have puzzled some of the cleverest and best of us. What do you mean? In plain language, you are in the wrong, and you know it, and you are glad to avail yourself of any sort of special pleading. Pardon me, Sir Harry, if I don’t seem quite respectful; I mean no offence; but the subject is one that comes home to me, and when I think of all that has happened—however, let that pass. Don’t believe, Sir Harry, all this talk about the labourer being contented. He *dare* not complain. If he showed independence, he would be elbowed into the workhouse at once. Who has he got to appeal to? Whose interest is it to take up his cause? He knows well enough that if he offended one master he would have a combination of employers dead against him. And a farm labourer isn’t like a mechanic; he and his fellows can’t combine in return. Don’t believe he is contented. Not a bit of it. If he doesn’t open his mouth, it is because all the spirit has been crushed out of him long ago. Now the question comes, who is to blame in this matter? Some say the farmers, some say the gentry who screw the farmers down, and force them to give low wages in self-defence; but I am inclined to think there’s a good deal to be said for and against on both sides. There are employers who are screws, and there is many an employer who is an open-handed, hospitable gentleman, though farmers of all sorts are too fond of looking on the labourer as a mere beast.

“There are landowners whom the people love, and who, they think, would take up their cause if they knew how matters stood; and there are landlords—there is more than one hereabouts—who spend their money up in London or abroad, anywhere but at home, and who have been so wasteful, and whose fathers have been so wasteful before them, that whatever they may wish to do they have not a sixpence to lay out on improvements. Now, Sir Harry, Providence has given you a great charge, and there is much good to be done and a great name to be earned in these parts if you would lay to heart the awful occurrence which has come so home to both of us. You know such things can be, and therefore I am sure you will set to work body and soul like a true Christian gentleman to mend them. I am not asking you to lay out money wholesale, or without hope of a return. It is not charity that the labourer wants, but judicious help. Alms would sink him lower than he is already. To make anything out of



him, you must raise his condition. There are those who would give him coals, and blankets, and food, and grudge him schooling or anything that would make him more of a man—"Because," say they, 'if he learnt his own strength, he would be independent and troublesome.' This is an evil doctrine, Sir Harry, and it is a shame to those who hold it. Don't, I beg of you, take for granted all that the farmers say. They have an interest in making things out to be quite as they should be. When the gentry come together and say we hear complaints, but really don't see that there is any fault to find, recollect one side has spoken but not the other. How often is Gaffer Brown himself asked to give his opinion? 'But,' cry your well-to-do folk, 'what would you make of such a dunderheaded old idiot?' I answer, if the labourer is as well off as you represent him, he must be a prosperous and intelligent man, and he will express himself clearly and to the point. Let us hear what he has to say, by all means. Don't, however, force him to speak under such influence that to blurt out the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, would be simple ruin to himself and to his family. Recollect, Sir Harry, that in appealing to you on behalf of what was once my own class, I don't beg a favour, but demand a right. It is a landowner's duty to see to the welfare of those on his estate, and these are days in which the class that sets duty aside is likely to be a loser in the long run. I have lived in a labourer's cottage myself, and I have worked my way in the world, and I snap my fingers at the cant that says—take one thing with another, the field-hand will be found as well off as the mechanic in town. Until I spoke to you, Sir Harry, you had never heard but one side. You had heard everyone but the labourer himself; and I say to you again, don't take me at my word unless you like, but use your eyes and look about you. Only don't be deluded with the idea that, because for years past the labourer has lived in filth and wretchedness, he has learnt to be contented with his lot, and that filth and wretchedness are the only things he is fit for. Believe me, Sir Harry, of late every class in the country has made progress but one, and that in too many districts, even now, is not a bit better off than it was a couple of hundred years ago."

"Stop," cried the Baronet, "we have had enough of this; let us cut it short. I am not going to be insulted in my own house, and by such fellows as you. Who are you? What do you want? Is it money? If so, I have none to give you."

"Sir Harry," exclaimed the man, and then he checked himself. "I am no beggar," he added quietly. "The insulting words you have just uttered, sir, are a disgrace to you. You have never supposed for a moment what you pretend to believe. I

am astonished that any gentleman, or any one calling himself a gentleman, should express himself in such language as you have employed."

Ella bit her lip with vexation; she laid her hand on her husband's shoulder, but Harry's temper was roused, and he was determined, as he afterwards expressed it, to shew that he was not going to be bullied by a mere vagabond, and that, whatever his wife might think, he was not quite tied to her apron-strings.

"Get out of my house," he cried; "I have listened to you long enough. What right have you to come here threatening and bullying? Do you suppose I am to be intimidated? By Jove! you will find yourself mistaken. You are some low Chartist scoundrel, I'll be bound. You talk like a letter in some rascally Sunday paper. Get out of this house—do you hear? What the devil had I to do with your father, I should like to know? This is not the Workhouse: why didn't he go there? He need not have died of starvation unless he had liked. Why didn't he save money? He had worked long enough, and he got regular wages. What had he to complain of? Do you suppose I am going to support all the idle scoundrels on my estate? Not a bit of it. I pay poor-rates, and I am not going to be plundered by people who have nothing better to do than whine and cant, and screw all they can out of me, and then laugh at me behind my back as an idiot. Do you think I care what fellows like you and your newspapers say? Read your Bible, and learn to reverence your betters. You set up to be steady, and sober, and industrious,—why don't you keep to your own station of life, and leave your superiors alone? You working-men are the curse of the country. You drink all your money away, you ruin your wives and families, you break up your homes and go upon strike, and then appeal to your betters for support. Do you suppose I would do anything for you after the scandalous things that have been said about me in the newspapers? Go to your friends, the editors and the penny-a-liners, if you want assistance. It is all rubbish what you say about your father—if he *was* your father!—I believe the whole affair is an imposition to get money out of me. He had no claim upon me. He worked, and got paid; and if he didn't choose to lay by money, that was his own look-out. Starvation indeed! In my opinion it is much more likely to have been drink."

"Harry," cried Ella, passionately, and springing from her chair, "you ought to be ashamed of such words. This is too bad. Your rage is your master. I am sure," she added, turning to Jarvis, "that when my husband comes to his senses he will regret as fully as I do now that you should ever have been addressed in such language. Pray accept my apologies—my most heartfelt

apologies—Sir Harry is not himself; he has been the subject of a very cruel attack in one of the papers; he has been strangely excited all the morning; were he as usual, I am sure he would never have allowed himself to be betrayed into such intemperate expressions.”

“Milady,” said Jarvis, “do not apologize for yourself. You have been nothing to me but most kind, most considerate. Apologies for Sir Harry I cannot receive. No man with a heart could have been led by the worst outbreak of passion into such words as he has just used. He has insulted the father—the *dead* father, milady, the father whom he left to starve—and that through his son. Let him look to it. It was a cruel act, an act that only a coward could have been guilty of, and that only a coward could forgive; an act that will entail its punishment hereafter, perhaps when the bitter words let drop in a moment of passion have been forgotten by the man who uttered them.”

“Do you threaten?” asked Ella, coldly.

“No, milady,” returned Jarvis, “I am an injured man, but I am not a scoundrel. I have other things to do than to lie in wait for an enemy who is beneath my contempt. Ah! you may look fierce, Sir Harry, but what I say is no more than the truth. You have nothing to fear from me, milady. I shall not trouble you by coming here again. I shall leave this accursed place at once, never I hope to return to it. Years ago I left it in despair, and I leave it again now almost wishing that it were blotted from the earth. Milady, I thank you for your kindness. I could heartily hope for your own sake that Sir Harry were capable of profiting by your good example.”

“Mr. Jarvis,” said Ella, “I am deeply sorry that you should have been so pained, and I repeat that Sir Harry himself will be equally sorry when he has reflected calmly on what has happened. Wherever you go you have my best wishes for your success. It would be an insult to offer you any assistance. I feel deeply for your misfortune, and I have felt deeply for you ever since it occurred. Culverton no doubt has hitherto been for you a place of evil associations, but I hope you will recollect that there is at least one of its inhabitants who sympathizes with your sorrows. I do hope that if ever a word from me can be of the slightest service to you, you will put false delicacy aside and apply to me as unreservedly as I would gladly help you?”

“Thank you, milady,” returned Jarvis, “you are very kind, but no—no, I don’t think I could ever bring myself to do it.”

He drew a deep sigh, bowed clumsily but respectfully to Ella, and left the room.

The baronet had sunk into an armchair, and looked sullen and sheepish.



His wife eyed him scornfully, "Oh! Harry, Harry!" she said, "you are indeed a little fool."

The object of this polite remark scowled and kicked viciously at the leg of the table.

"The infernal scamp," he muttered.

His wife held up her finger in token of silence. "No," she said, after listening for a moment, "It is all right, I hear his footsteps on the gravel outside."

"D——n him," cried Sir Harry, springing from his chair in a fury.

"You are an idiot, a perfect madman," cried his wife, wrathfully. "Had you only done as I told you, all would have passed off well. However, you *would* have your own way, and believe me you have made a dangerous enemy."

"Pooh!" replied the baronet, "you heard what he said himself. He is going to leave Culverton directly, we shall never hear of him again."

"Absurd!" answered Ella, with a darkening face, "we have just seen that fellow for the first time, don't flatter yourself for a moment that we have seen him for the last."

## THE WITCHES' SABBATH.\*

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YE see before ye, sirs, an ancient witch,  
 Haggard, much worn by years, yet more by sin ;  
 For time it hath no power upon this flesh,  
 Save but to wrinkle this mine outer skin,  
 While I drag on my being, weird and wan,  
 Fated for aye to live,—a death in life.  
 For till the day of doom I may not die.  
 And so I tell a tale of Vauderie ;†  
 Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear.  
 To me time is not ; what hath passed is now,  
 I see not things in memory, but in view,  
 Palpably present, as but yesterday.

A league from Arras, skirting dark Moflaines,  
 Riseth a fountain in a lonely wood,  
 A spot on all sides by tall pines shut in,  
 And dense umbrageous oaks. Hard by a dark  
 And sunless pool, whose stagnant depths ooze out  
 A foul mephitic odour. Here do we  
 Hold week by week our fearful revelries,  
 Scorn we the Christian's God, the Babe divine,  
 The Holy Cross, the Blessed Trinity,  
 And despite do unto the Sacred Name.

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\* It is well known to the readers of curious books that the mediæval superstition of witchcraft was but a continuation of the "Phallic" or "Priapic" worship of heathen antiquity. The "Witches' Sabbath" was the last form which the "Liberalia" of Pagan Rome assumed in Western Europe ; and a few—but only a few—of its leading features are described here, for many of them will not bear description. They are mainly taken from the "*Malleus Maleficarum*," or "*Hammer of Witches*," the work of Jacob Sprenger and two other German Inquisitors of the fifteenth century. Reference has also been made to Bodin's treatise, *De la Démonomanie des Sorciers* (Paris, 1580), and to De Lanere's *Tableau de l'Inconstance des Mauvais Anges et Démons* (Paris, 1613), where a full account of these strange mysteries will be found. It is almost needless to remind the reader that the "Witches' Sabbath" is introduced into the scene on the Hartz Mountains, in Goethe's *Faust*.

† Witchcraft in the Middle Ages, was called "Vauderie," or as the word was then written "Vaulderie."

But in God's stead, for we have deeply drank  
The philtres of apostate fiends, we take  
Satan our Lord, our Master, and our King.  
And under form of a right noble goat,  
Ancient, and snow white, with long branching horns,  
And beard down-flowing to his cloven feet,  
Prostrate we all adore him ; he alone  
• He gives and consecrates the wondrous oil  
With which anointed we can conquer space,  
Fly through thin air, and ride across the sky,  
To join the deadly feast : thither we go  
Borne on aerial coursers, without foot  
Or hoof, or mane. Such power hath Vauderie,  
And such the spells that work our will in air.

And when we reach the confines of that wood,  
There is no lack of worshippers, and we  
Keep awful Sabbath. Thither flock in crowds,  
Burglars and nobles, prince and peasantry,  
Old men and children, youths and tenderest maids,  
Drawn to that grove by mystic sympathy.  
Nor these alone ; aye, but the tonsured there,  
Shrouding their shaven heads with cloak and pall,  
Stand by assistant at our fearful rites,  
God's priests, monks, bishops, yea and cardinals.

Straight is the banquet spread ; the feast begins.  
With varied meats and drinks, and luscious wines,  
Our table groans, such as may best inflame  
Our sensual appetite and foul lust inspire.  
And he, our president, the ancient goat,  
He whom ye Christians call the foul black fiend,  
Ner idly call, high in a chair of state,  
Of darkest ebony, sits and frowns down  
With awful brow upon his banqueters.  
To him then bring we offerings, or of blood,  
Of newts or toads, or entrails of a babe  
Torn from its mother's breast, or brain of ox,  
Or deadliest adder's gall, or serpent's tongue,  
Or wing of bat obscene, or nightly owl,  
Or lock of witches' hair at midnight shorn,  
Beneath the pale cold crescent of the moon ;  
Or, daintiest dish, the flesh of criminal  
Who high upon a gibbet in mid air  
Doth hang to foulest birds and dogs a prey.



Then when the feast is over, and the wine,  
 The maddening wine, has upward sent its fumes  
 Into our whirling brain, we stand around,  
 And spit and trample on the Christian's cross,  
 That heavenly symbol of all conquering love,  
 And curse the Saviour's name.

Then rises straight  
 One of our number, or the goat himself,  
 Or one of his prime followers, and he speaks  
 Words that no Christian's ear may hear.

“ Good friends,  
 “ Nay, brethren all,—for such are we in league,  
 “ In deadliest league combined, to war against  
 “ The lowly Nazarite and the Christian's creed,  
 “ Brethren in pride, in enmity, in doom :—  
 “ It is the midnight hour, our hour to speak.  
 “ Come forth and bold recount what valiant deed  
 “ Of despite to the holy law of God,  
 “ Since last we met, good friends, ye each have done.”  
 Then rise we all in turn, and tell unmoved  
 Our witcheries, enchantments, sorceries,  
 How we have lured a galleon to her doom  
 On the sharp rocks, or drown'd a Christian babe,  
 Stol'n fattened calves from out their stalls, or drained  
 A cow's full udder of its juicy store,  
 Madden'd a watch-dog, or, where cross-roads meet,  
 Borne off the satchel of a traveller  
 Footsore and weary as he lay and slept;  
 Or torn a corpse from 'neath the chancel stone,  
 Or robbed an altar of the holy pyx,  
 And consecrated flagon, and the bread,  
 The holy bread, have trampled in the dust.

Ariseth once again the ancient goat  
 And thanks his workers in set form of speech,  
 Discoursing on the mysteries of our craft,  
 In words of wisdom to the wise alone.\*  
 The sermon ended, followeth loud applause.  
 To the sound of bells and magic music then  
 The tables are removed ; in wildest dance  
 We next entwine, and lawless orgies hold,  
 To the soft strains of wanton instruments.

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\* Φωνῶντα ξυνεῖσι. Greek Proverb.

Exhausted then we sink upon the ground,  
The tall trees of the wood like sprites gaze on ;  
The fountain glistens with unearthly light :  
Then a change passeth o'er the scene ; the moon  
Pales ; rocks re-echo with the thunder clap ;  
And strange weird lightnings play athwart the sky.

Then ere the first faint dawn of newborn day  
We see appearing in the East, our King  
With gracious presence breaks the banquet up,  
And sends us forth on other mischiefs bent.  
Our steeds again we mount, and borne on high  
Through the night air we steer our homeward ways  
With zig-zag course o'er the tall pinewood dark,  
And gain the regions waste and wide, or e'er  
The cock crow forth his greeting to the sun.

Such is my tale ; a tale of Vauderie :  
Whoso hath ears to hear it, let him hear.

## A CUE FROM FROISSART.

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AMONG the very many true things which that worthy and picturesque old chronicler, the *Sieur de Froissart*, said anent the English of his day, there was one little statement volunteered which was particularly true. "The English," said he, "take their pleasure very sadly"—*Moult triste*.

As in his, so in the present more enlightened age, the times have changed, but in this respect we have not changed with them. More cleanly, more civilized, more pious, if you will, we have become, but we still make our pleasure a very melancholy business. There is this difference between us and the benighted foreigner. He makes a play of his work, dances and sings over the most menial occupation as though he were taking part in a *vaudeville*, and life really were too great a *bagatelle* to be treated seriously; we make a work of our play. Amongst the upper ten thousand, the gorgeous ones who "have fed on honey-dew and drank the milk of Paradise," it is a crime deserving of the highest social penalty to show any emotion whatever, consequently a face beaming with pleasure is thought very bad style indeed. Amongst the more unfortunate millions, who are kept outside the crystal bar and not allowed so much as to peep at *Belgravia's* mysteries, there exists an unpleasant tendency to become so fuddled at the end of a holiday that all emotion is drowned.

To the writer of these pages some such thoughts as these were suggested by the perusal of the myriad posters and handbills which at the holiday season of the year flaunt gorgeously at railway stations, and beguile the weary traveller with the magical announcements, "Scarborough and back for 3s. 6d.;" "A week at the sea-side;" "From Saturday to Monday at Brighton," and the like: at sight of which there arises a pleasant vision of breezy uplands and waving grass, over which the thyme-scented wind sweeps freely, and of the sky-lark singing a hymn to God, and the awful ocean thundering a chorus which no trained tenor or cloud of white-robed choristers can emulate, all of which is pleasant to think of with the thermometer standing at 90°, and the pavement like molten lead, and the sky like brass.

But to return to our chronicler. The question is, how much real pleasure do the people get from these excursions which are so



attractively set forth? Are they strengthened in body and ennobled in mind by these holidays? Are these pleasure trips characterized by unfailing merriment, and good humour, and sobriety, or must we fall back upon the proverb and confess that the pleasure hunters are taking their pleasure sadly? And taking the question of amusement generally, surveying the English people bent on amusing itself from the highest point on which we will place the lady and gentleman of fashion, to the lowest which we will allot to the British workman, shall we not find honest Froissart's words coming true? It is only a difference in kind between the jaded swell and pallid beauty crawling into their carriage while the gray dawn adds anything but a roseate hue to their faces after a ball, and the common holiday seekers returning in the excursion van from Epping or Broxbourne, or stuffed like so many sheep into a stifling railway carriage, half-asleep, in many cases wholly drunk, making night hideous with discordant performances on the tin trumpet, and awaking the next morning for a headache and repentance. Look at that form of popular entertainment amongst the higher classes which is called a ball, a dance, or a hop, just as the taste and fancy of the describer may suggest. Ask the maidenhood of Great Britain, and they all with one accord, from the blushing *ingénue* just free from the backboard, to the by no means youthful, yet in every way hopeful maiden of many seasons. They will all agree in saying that a ball is the most complete realization of earthly happiness. It is the embodiment of Elysium in the eyes of those who are "tall and handsome and twenty-two, with nothing whatever on earth to do but to dine, and to dance, and to bill and to coo." And therewith the impassive British swell will agree, provided that the music be good, the floor easy, and partners abundant. Paterfamilias, good easy man, whose dancing days are over, will concede that it is pleasant to see the young ones enjoy themselves. Materfamilias will think, if she confesses not, that of all the happy hunting grounds, whereon the bait of bright eye and winning smile may be most successfully employed, and the prey be judiciously hooked, a ball-room is the most promising; for, as reason the wary campaigners, although *croquet* has its merits, there is too much attention required to the game. The dangers of pic-nics counterbalance their usefulness. Singing duetts together may in some cases pay, but is open to the same objection as *croquet*. But for flirtation, with a meaning, the palm must be conceded to the dimly-lighted conservatory or the handy terrace, where half-heard music, and the sensuous breath of flowers, and the ground swell of passion after the dance, all seduce the unwary into putting that question which is easy enough to ask, but exceeding difficult to recall. But ask your philosopher

or your jaded worldling what a ball is, and he will answer to this effect: that it is a company of people who have probably never met before in their lives, and certainly care not if they never meet again, crowded together into a room too small for half the number, where the heat is tropical, and the atmosphere laden with dust enough to drive Professor Tyndall out of his senses; that this company has met together at the hour when sensible people go to bed, to dance till sensible people are on the point of getting up; that during this dance the performers look as though they were in attendance at a funeral; that having heated themselves with the exercise, they at once proceed to catch violent colds, and lay the seeds of future consumption in draughty doorways or at open windows; that at the very time the digestion requires rest, an unnatural and unnecessary meal is taken, called in hideous mockery supper; and that at last when the day-light will be no longer excluded, like sheeted spectres gray and wan, the once blooming beauties shiver into their carriages, and their stalwart partners hasten to brandy and soda and cigars, and much derisive talk over their conquests. And the next morning little Miss Pipe, the grocer's daughter, reading the long list of names of the gay and the gallant ones who were present at Lady Doldrums' dance, will sigh, and think what a very fine thing it must be to wear gay dresses, and go to balls, and dance with Prince Prettyman every night. Poor little maiden! If she only knew that there are many aching hearts beating under beautiful dresses, and some cares which the most rapid of waltzes cannot chase away!

Does this strike you as being somewhat cynical? Come with me to a ball, and see for yourself how much amusement the performers thereat seem to be extracting from the entertainment. At first sight it all seems charming enough. Mr. Fiddler and his merry men are playing the most enchanting of all Gungl's waltzes, the room is redolent with subtle perfumes, the dresses are very gorgeous, and the wearers thereof are very bewitching, and as the mazy dance proceeds, there comes a light into the eye, and a flush deepens on the cheek, which may be amusement, but seems more like passion. But look more closely; scan the impassive features of yon swell, languidly drawling through the graceful figure known as *cavalier seul*. Settled melancholy is stamped upon his features, listless indifference is in his movements, he feels that it is a duty which he must get through if possible without treading on his partner's dress, and it is with a feeling of great relief that the dance finishes; he leads her back to her *chaperone*, and seeks refuge in the fascinating bowl. But not one trace of amusement.

Then have you ever watched the faces of those poor girls to whom society, in cruel irony, has assigned the name of "wallflower." What an amusing business a ball must be for them! Doomed, either for lack of beauty or money, to sit out the whole evening while their more fortunate sisters are whirling by panting and happy, and to know that if some man does take pity on them and lead them out to dance or in to supper, it is merely because he is either more kind-hearted than his fellows, or such a very bad dancer that other ladies will not venture to accept his offers. I have often wondered, at small dances, as to which was the more miserable—the poor hireling who strums away on the piano for ten-and-sixpence a night till her arms ache and her fingers are blistered, or the poor, woe-begone wallflower, who sits in solitary exile on the remote bench. The player is, I think, in better case, for she is earning her livelihood, and her heart is all the time with the old infirm mother, for whom the night's wage will buy some little comfort or other. And then look at the *Chaperones*—sadly indeed do they take their amusement—martyrs to society—condemned to fight the battle as long as nature will allow them, never relinquishing hope while there is the faintest chance of their charges making the wished-for *coup*.

Well do I ween, that if some future chronicler writes the "Book of Society's Martyrs," the English Chaperone will fill no unimportant chapter therein. A weary lot is hers, and only the excitement of the matrimonial market keeps her alive. For gallant, unsparing self-devotion to the cause of her daughter, commend me to the Belgravian mother. Taken out to balls when she would much prefer staying at home; sitting in a stifling, crowded room, when she feels that her poor old bones would be better in bed; stunned by the music, the everlasting strains of which she hears night after night, and to which she is as indifferent as Midas; choked with the dust, blinded by the glare and heat, poisoned by champagne taken at untimely hours, and, above all, compelled to watch her charge with the eye of a hawk lest some detrimental, with more assurance than shekels, may cut out the desirable young man, who fleeth from the snare even as a bird from the fowler. Oh, the weary watches these forlorn yet gallant old ladies keep till the early morning! And oh, the wretched spectres they look when they quit the halls of dazzling splendour and crawl off to bed, for a short and merciful respite from their cares! And the old boys, too—the Major Pendennisses of society—how sadly do they take their amusement. If it is a wretched sight to see a mere boy ape the manner and the vices of advanced manhood, surely the sight of a poor, padded old sinner trying to shine with the graces of youth, is more pitiable still.



The hair dyed with the purple of Tyre, the thin and shaky hands, on which the rings will clink, and the tired, hot feet, crammed into the torturing boot, and the tongue, tremulous yet daring to tell wicked stories—a pitiable sight, and one which decorous youth will do well to pass by—*guarda è passa*.

And now, having shown that with regard to the dwellers in marble halls the adage which commenced this paper is in some sort true, let us come down lower and see how it affects the multitude. In amusement, as in every other things, it is a question of *quot homines tot sententiæ*. No two men think the same about what constitutes the real nature of pleasure, or what is the best way of spending a holiday. As with men, so with countries. The English labourer's notion of a holiday, or a day of pleasure, reaches no higher than beer and skittles. In the drinking of the former he loses all his senses, in the playing of the latter his money, and after a judicious admixture of both he returns home, drunk and savage, to dance a hornpipe, perchance, on his wife's face, or playfully fell her with his fist. Unless religion, or the popular imitation thereof, enter into a Welshman's holiday, it is incomplete. Taffy likes nothing better than a "Holy Fair," where his pious fervour can be quenched with much ale, and he can cry "Amen" and "Glory," and dance to his heart's content. Hibernia's warlike sons will sum up their holiday in two words—"whiskey and a fight," a mad medley of whirling sticks and broken heads and party-cries, while the canny "Child of the Mist" likes that form of amusement best which costs him least. With the criminal classes an amusement is enhanced in value if it be contrary to the law, and Bill Sikes will confess to a liking for a "little mill" down the river, where he will roar with joy while two men beat one another into a jelly and out of all semblance to humanity, in the pursuit of what is called "manly old British sport." The highest form of amusement which it enters into the mind of a sailor to conceive is equestrian exercise, and he is no sooner on dry land than he proceeds to charter a steed, and to tack and steer him in the most wonderful manner; and if a soldier can get a boat, though he narrowly escapes drowning, he is happy. "*Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum collegisse juvat*," to some men, tandem-driving, albeit both foolish and dangerous, is the embodiment of pleasure.

I know a clergyman, whose amusement in leisure hours is to drive the night-mail, which he does with all the skill of the late eccentric Mr. Windham; and amongst "mine ancients" I reckon one who employs his holidays in exploring, under the care of a trusty inspector, the worst part of the night-side of London, venturing into the most murderous slums—in one of which he

will probably stay some day for ever. You may as well endeavour to curb the winds as measure out amusement by rote and rule; all that a philanthropist wishes is to make amusement as amusing as possible to the common people. Now that a holiday is to them a very great boon, who can doubt, and large was his heart, and wise his purpose, who first suggested the Saturday half-holiday. And if the railway companies did not in some of their cheap excursions make holocausts of the holiday folk, much praise would be due to them. But theory and practice are terribly dissimilar in this point of public amusement. In theory, nothing looks more attractive than a day's pleasuring in the country for the London workman, who all the weary week long has scarcely caught a glimpse of the sky,—save the patch which appears over Dreary Court. It will surely be a great boon to him to revel in the pure country air, to lie at full length on the grass, and stare at the beautiful blue sky, to draw in health with every breath that he takes: to eat, drink, and be merry with his wife and children, and after a most enjoyable day, to return home a better man, and a happier. This is quite a beautiful theory, and many a bald-headed philosopher over his glass of port, and in his easy-chair, will moralise thereon and will say: "A great boon, sir, these excursions for the working classes: raises their tone, and that sort of thing: softens their manners and does not suffer them to be ferocious, as we used to translate from Ovid." And a very pretty sentiment, too, albeit a not very truthful one. It is painful enough to have to destroy popular delusions, and to have to discover that there are two sides to every picture: the painted side, with its wealth of glowing colours, and the canvas side, which is not particularly interesting. Now if our elderly philanthropist will take the trouble to accompany the excursion vans which every Saturday morning convey their loads of holiday-seekers from the odorous neighbourhoods of Shoreditch and Hoxton, to the pleasure gardens which lie beyond Tottenham and Edmonton, I fear me that he will be disenchanted, and return home a wiser, if not a sadder man. For of what character will he find the amusements provided for the holiday-seekers? Healthful, edifying, moral! Very hardly. Everything tends to beer. Skittles is a game hardly to be dissociated from that grateful beverage. Dancing on an *al fresco* platform, on a hot day, is a work of labour and engenders thirst; and where Monsieur Jean Jacques Ouvrier slakes that thirst with *eau sucré*, or the very thinnest and cheapest *vin ordinaire*, and thereby keeps his head clear, and his senses about him, his far superior neighbour, John Smith from Shoreditch dispatches pint after pint of a liquor, heavy, and nearly always drugged, which in no long time filches away what little

brains he has, and makes him sullen, besotted, stupid. In some cases the happy excursionist does not stir out of the public-house at all. Thus leaving it a curious problem why a man should travel ten miles to get drunk, when he can do so in his native gin palace.

The very worst feature of this happy holiday though, is the intemperance it causes in the young and the foolish. So many types of youthful vice, and all so terrible to see. The boy just entered at Dishonesty's Training School: swaggering along with a huge pipe, or rank cigar, in his mouth, or howling the senseless words of a comic song, and trying to look as if it were all very pleasurable. The girls—not all bad, but on the road to ruin—a road with a great incline, and very easy to travel on when the devil plays charioteer, and lust and drink ride as postillions. It is sad to see young cheeks, with every particle of the bloom, the *purpureus color* of youth worn off, and eyes in which is no softness, and to hear laughter with no ring, no merriment in it. But worst of all is it to watch these holiday folks returning. That they are all drunk, any one can see, and from the noise they make—the unearthly shouts, the wild screaming, wherewith they beguile their journey, anyone might think they had escaped from Bedlam. And this they term enjoyment, though of course there are exceptions. It is not in the nature of some men to turn themselves into a kind of monster half-brute and half-fool; there are many who *can* see beauty in waving grass and chequered landscape and stately trees, for such as these a holiday is useful indeed, and does them as much good as half-a-dozen sermons, but unfortunately *exceptio probat regulam*. It is the same with railway excursions and trips. Those who dwell by the “melancholy ocean” all the year round, bewail excessively the existence of cheap trips, and say that they cannot venture into the open air from Saturday to Monday for fear of having their sacred privacy disturbed by the vulgar “trippers.” They cannot conceive what business these common people can have in enjoying themselves at all, and think it most unmannerly of the railway companies to bring such slovenly, unhandsome things betwixt the wind and their nobility. They would rather not know that there are people who are dubious about their H's, and have to work for their living, and dine (if they have anything to dine off) in the middle of the day, and laugh loudly and have emotions—society ignores these things, and society's curled darlings would rather not hear of the people who practise them. But to find one's choicest haunts at Tenby, or Blackpool, or Scarborough, invaded by the vulgar masses, to find with Captain Boldwig (alas, and alas, how the mere name brings up CHARLES DICKENS, and reminds



me that he is gone), that "they have actually been devouring their food" there, is unbearable. Yet if this were all the fault to be found with cheap trips, no one would complain much. God made the country for the delight and the health of all His children; and the great sea smiles kindly alike on costly porcelain and coarse clay; and the sky-lark is no fashionable songster, but sings as merrily for homeless outcasts as for my right honourable gentleman. *A qui la fauté*, then; the great fault of the cheap trip is this—it is too hurried, too crowded, and too dangerous.

A better example of the incarnation of discomfort cannot be imagined than a single day's excursion, hundreds of which during the past Whitsun holidays have run over the length and breadth of England. Men, women, and children, if they escape suffocation in the awful rush for places, find themselves huddled together like so many sheep in a close carriage—the national selfishness of the insular character developing itself in the men persisting, spite of the illness of the children and the complaints of the women, in smoking rank tobacco. An excursion-train must wait for everything, consequently hours are wasted on the road; railway officials do not think much of excursionists' lives, consequently a carriage with its contents is now and then smashed to atoms. Arrived at their destination, the holiday people wander about disconsolate—sometimes in quest of what they may see, oftener in quest of something to drink. A few hurried hours and it is time to return again. The frantic rush to get places, a few free fights in the attempt, a good deal of maudlin singing (and, by-the-way, how excessively dreary the comic song is), a little *amateur* pocket-picking, of which A 1 takes cognizance, and the happy excursionists reach home tired, out of spirits, and unable to delude themselves into the idea that they have spent a pleasant day. Then there are the various amusements which nightly are offered to rich and poor in great London. Will the intelligent foreigner tell me that the faces of the people reflect great joy, or even interest, in them? First let him scan the grand tier of the opera, while Titiens or Nilsson the divine are singing the best music in the most finished style; he will see there some faces bored, some impassive, some turned away entirely from the stage, the faces of those *qui s'amusaient moult triste*. And if from thence he adjourns to any music hall you will, and resumes his study amongst the common people, he will see more excitement of a drunken order, and hear more shouting and banging of tables and breaking of glasses, but no real amusement. As well say that the laugh of the poor painted woman, who haunts the place, is full of glee and merriment, or that the drivelling mass of filth and idiocy which the "Merry Andrew" on the stage is shouting,

and for which he draws a salary that would gladden many a pale curate's heart, is a funny song. And yet the shop-boy, and the merchant's clerk, think this the *acmè* of pleasure—life indeed—and roll home in the morning roaring out at the top of their voices that they are "magnificent bricks," though their heads a little later tell them that they are pitiful fools. And I might essay a lower flight still, and show how the criminal classes, and the waifs of the streets amuse themselves at nights, when they creep out of their hiding places, and crowd the "penny gaffs" and the lowest singing saloons. There is a ferocity about these entertainments which well becomes the audience. Refined vice is bad, naked, unblushing vice is more awful still, and vice without a particle of humour or merriment is worse than all. The class of songs sung in these places is worse, if anything, than that patronised at the music hall—pitiless indecency of word and gesture, calling forth harsh plaudits from young children with the faces of old men,—listened to and approved by girls, some of them with sweet faces still—God help them!—but soon to be marked with the searing-iron of vice. Nor is this sort of thing confined at all to large towns; in quiet country villages, so pretty, so peaceful, that the traveller might think them above all guile—nestled as they are in quiet, leafy nooks, or under the shadow of great hills, or lying on the edge of brown moorlands. For stupid, melancholy debauchery, commend me to your village fair—whether it be the hiring fair, where men and women are huddled like animals to be sold, or the ordinary pleasure fair held at Whitsuntide, or some such holiday time. The writer of these pages, in quest of novelty but a short time ago, was present at an annual fair held in one of the Northern Counties—the name is neither here nor there—which for mingled drunkenness and brutality, combined with the entire absence of pleasure, might not find its equal in England. It was held on the brow of a hill, and the actors in the scene were chiefly colliers and mill hands. The view from that hill is, without exception, one of the loveliest in the land—a vast expanse of country stretching far away to the distant sea. The day was everything that could be desired—sky as blue as a sapphire and cloudless, a pure sweet breeze softening the heat, and everything in nature tending to raise the mind and gladden the heart of her children; and yet, with all around inviting to pleasure and happiness, these people, who had come from smoky towns and dark coal-pits, chose to crowd the small public-house, which must have made a fortune, and the booths in which an iniquitous game of chance flourished, till they were partially drunk and quite penniless. Then commenced the fun of the fair. Your collier, at the best of times, is not a Christian gen-

tleman; when drunk, he is not one remove from a savage, consequently when his money was gambled away he took refuge in trials of personal strength, ending in nearly every case in a brutal fight—kicking, biting, and attempting to strangle being the most favourite modes of warfare. Some who had been endowed with longer purses and weaker heads, succumbed to the poisonous beer, and lay prone on the hill side, shaming the pure face of Heaven. As for the women, they were fitting mates for such lords; and I question if the most accomplished Billingsgate performer could have rivalled their language; and the young girls amused themselves in rolling down the hill side, very much like Nora Creina in one respect—the naturalness of their charms—but of common decency or common restraint they seemed to possess not one particle, and what the result of the day's pleasuring to them would be was obvious enough. Add to all this a deafening din from our friend "Cheap Jack"—to my mind the only decent person in the crowd—a mingled chorus of drunken oaths and blasphemy from the revellers, and the picture is complete. And all this was happening not a hundred miles away from one of the centres of English civilization, and in the nineteenth century.

It is pleasant to believe that we have improved as a nation in morals and civilization, that we have put down this nuisance and that abuse, that the middle ages were dark and brutal and uncleanly, and the present age moral and refined and enlightened; but still with a scene like this before my eyes, I could not but look back on the days of the may-pole and the innocent dances of our forefathers, and the quaint old amusements which were harmless enough, at any rate so that even the lord of the manor and his lady might grace the village festival with their presence, without fear of being shocked.

And now, to what good has all this been written? simply to chat garrulously over a thread-bare proverb from an old French Chronicler, and to indulge in that grumble which the heart of the Englishman loveth. However, I will end with something really practical, in bringing before my reader's notice a subject which is nigh akin to mine, and which has been so eloquently pleaded in the leading papers, that only its merit excuses my taking it up.

It must be known to every one who has waded through this paper, that in London there are hundreds and thousands of poor wretched children who have never seen the country in all their lives—who have really no conception that there exists another world altogether, a world of green grass and waving trees and beautiful flowers. It cannot be wondered that these little things are unable to form a right conception of a good and merciful Father; all they see of His creation is a dirty streak of grey sky, and the



world to them is represented by a filthy slum, and the dark pitiless streets. Now Christian men and women, and gentle-hearted ministers and their wives, are appealing for funds to enable these children to enjoy one day in the country. It is a small sum that they ask, ridiculously small in comparison with what my lady gives for her pet poodle, or my lord expends in cigars, yet with this small sum great good may be done. It is affecting to read of the ecstasy of these poor gutter children when first they are taken into the country, how they bury their faces in the cool grateful grass, and burst into a passion of tears at the sight of the humblest flower, and revel in the new wonderful world, which must be to them like Heaven, so soft and bright and loving is it. No one can estimate the good one such day as this may effect amongst the benighted ones, letting light into their darkened hearts, teaching them the lesson in nature's language that God is Love. A great writer has just been taken away from us, a mighty genius, and a man of a large and loving heart. Not amongst the least of his good works was the earnestness and the power with which he pleaded the cause of the homeless children of London; he loved them, and wrote of them with a true and a reverent hand. Should my readers feel that the name of the illustrious dead awakes kindly and generous feelings, and should they show their sympathy with the poor children by sending as much as will enable one of them to enjoy a happy day in the country, my words will not have been written in vain, and in the case of the little ones at least good Froissart's saying will be most amply refuted.

## OUR FRIEND GRAY.

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WHEN I am out of humour with the world, I like to spend an hour with Mr. Matthew Gray. If I feel ever so scornful, resentful, bruised, or crest-fallen when I enter his house, I am pretty sure to come out of it soothed, calm, and content. Not that he is a great arbitrator or regulator of rights and wrongs, and has looked into my case versus my fellow-creatures, and given a verdict in my favour: far from it. He is a kindly, simple old gentleman, a collector of curious odds and ends out of love for the grand old past and those who lived in it; but when he shows me the quaint and almost transparent little cup out of which his great-grandmother drank her tea, or perhaps her wooden snuff-box, with a punctured pattern upon it, or the wooden busk of her bodice punctured too, as though she had tattooed it, I think it is probable that gentlewoman may have felt scornful, resentful, bruised, or crestfallen as often as I, and the littleness of little things, compared with the glories of the hereafter, to which we are all travelling, and to which she has already entered, comes to me, and with the perception of this truth comes peace.

I wish that every one I care for could know Mr. Matthew Gray. He lives on the upper flat of a small two-storey house on the shady side of the long straggling main street of a north-country town. His little house is a curiosity in its way, for it is nearly three hundred years old, and it is built with the low doorway and the small square windows divided into three lights by mullions, common to those days. The only approach to a quadruped to be seen about his place is the skeleton of a mouse under a glass case; nor is there anything that tells of human companionship. He lives alone, makes his own bed, cooks his own dinner, just as though he was at sea, and his little house was his cabin. His chief recreation consists in attending all sales, with an eye to the acquisition of curiosities or works of art that may not be too highly valued for his purse; and if an old picture, be it ever so cracked, blistered, or corroded, should be knocked down to him before he is obliged to cease bidding, great is his satisfaction. Especially he interests himself in the sales of the effects of the "good" families of the neighbourhood. The auctioneers all

know him well, and when they are about to put up any old piece of furniture or china ware, scrap of carving, or old picture or engraving, they address him, as he stands looking wistfully at it, in the knot of bidders, with perhaps some such too off-handed phrase as : "Now, Mr. Gray, this is in your way. What shall I say?"

In his quiet shady sitting-room everything that can be framed and glazed is thus beautified and preserved, and hung up upon the walls, which are covered in this manner from the ground to the low ceiling. The two deep, broad, white window seats are set out with curiosities and antiquities ; old china jars, bowls and plates full of coins, fragments of Roman pottery, and other small objects repose on three oval tables with twisted legs ; and on the top of an inlaid chest of drawers stands the treasured tea-set, to a cup of which I have, I hope not irreverently, alluded. Two or three high-backed oak chairs, and a more modern couch, serve as seats for his visitors.

"This is considered a very good likeness of Her Majesty," said the unsophisticated collector one day to a lady friend whom I took to see him, as he placed a small framed photograph of our Sovereign in her hand.

"We Londoners," she replied, with some archness, scarcely regarding it, "do not look upon the Queen as a curiosity, Mr. Gray. I don't know though, on second thoughts," she went on, turning from an old French engraving she was examining, "but that we shall come to do so, for we see so little of her now-a-days. The London West End tradespeople complain sadly, now I come to think of it, that the sight of her is such a rarity, because when the Court is dull, they say, trade is the same."

"Dear me," he answered, "I should not have thought they would have been that keen. What would they have, I should like to know? The Queen, I am sure, could not be other than she is. What would decent folk say if she went gadding about like a March hare? Oh! I can't abide wanton widows. No! no! But I like my Queen. I like my Queen," he repeated, breathing upon the glass over the photograph, and polishing it with a soft coloured silk duster, that had once been a bright scarlet and yellow handkerchief. "Where could you find a better woman?" he asked, quite ruffled, as he replaced the portrait on the nail from which he had taken it down. "Dear, dear! to think of a wanton widow for a Queen! Oh, I can't abide wanton widows."

"Now, you'll never guess what these are," by-and-bye he broke in, turning the subject when he was somewhat mollified at my friend's explanation that she did not altogether concur in the sentiments of the London tradesmen, though, from hearing only



one side of the question, they had certainly made an impression upon her. "What do you take these to be?"

My companion took the objects he now showed her in her hand. They were pieces of pipe-clay, about three or four inches long, shaped like miniature rolling-pins. "I should say they were pipes," she guessed, "made by some idiot who forgot to put the bowls on."

"Ah! I was sure you would not know what they were," he cried, delighted, "and yet I'll be bound your great-grandmother could have told me, if I had asked her. In the days when periwigs were worn, people used to put these little clay rollers into the bows and loops and curls when they took them off at night; and then in the morning they were quite neat and trim, ready to put on. I can just remember a few very old gentlemen wearing periwigs, when I was a boy. Oh, no! they are not pipes, bless you, I will show you some that I have that were used when tobacco first came into use, and you will see the difference. Look how small the bowls are, and how short the stems are. Tobacco was precious then. Have you ever read the *Spectator*? Well, then, you'll have heard all about periwigs, and pipes too, before now, I'll warrant."

"Is not this an acquisition since I was here last, Mr. Gray?" I inquired, as I came upon a radiant painting of a jolly, red-faced, laughing piper, in a broad gilt frame. "I have never seen this before, have I?"

An entranced smile broke over the old gentleman's face.

"No, you have never seen that before, at all events not here. I've waited for that pictur' fifty years, and now, at last, I've got it. It used to hang, when I was a boy, in the hall at Hazon Park, then it was put in a corridor, and the last time I saw it, it was still at Hazon, but hanging over the kitchen door, all smoke and grease. Such a scene as it was! But I've cleaned it, ye see, and framed it, and it's a grand pictur'. It's a Holb'in."

"Do you think it is meant for the Piper of Hamelyn?" I asked. "You know we are told 'he smiled a little smile,' as he came playing down the street, when he charmed all the rats into the river."

"I'm sure I can't say," he replied, "I never heard of the Piper of Hamelyn. I only know it is a very fine pictur'. The colouring is so fine. But you must not think it was anything like this when I got it. You would not have known it."

"How do you know it is a Holbein?" I asked, cruelly. The gentle collector, thus brought to bay, confessed that it might not be the work of that master's hand, but urged it was indisputably in his style, and a grand picture. The next moment we had an-

other example of this same power of generalization. He showed us what he called a miniature of his mother when she was a girl. When I looked at this I found it was a photograph of a portion of an engraving shewing the head and shoulders of a beautiful Greek, and when I relentlessly asked him for an explanation, he told us that he had bought the engraving with this figure in it, because the face put him in mind of his mother as he could remember her, and he had it photographed as a likeness of her. "I have another portrait of her, though," he added, "for which she sat when she was old, but it is nothing like her compared to this."

In the best light in the room, in the chief place, hangs an oil-painting of a small-featured, sweet-faced old lady in a black dress, with a neat, closely-quilted cap on her head, and her hands serenely folded in front of her. This was his mother. She was a widow when scarcely more than twenty years of age, and it was in her gentle companionship that he had passed all his best days. Everything that had ever been hers he regarded as sacred; and it was his pride and pleasure that her picture should still preside over his little household gods. As we looked at it, the sunshine that was flooding the opposite side of the street, was succeeded by a chilly gloom, as though a cloud was passing over head, and we all three stood speechless for a minute or two.

"What is this?" at length asked my friend, lifting up a salad dish that had been mended in a great many places, anxious to turn from a theme that had filled us all with sadness, and quite changed the character of the collection for a while. "Is this any precious kind of china?"

Mr. Gray was shutting up and putting down the home-made miniature which pleased him so well; but he looked up, and, coming out of the past into the present with a sigh, answered: "It's just a bit of Worcester porcelain. You know folks used to think a great deal of Chelsea chaney and Worcester chaney. It is a piece out of Lord Reedwater's dinner service, that was broken and thrown away. See, here is his crest upon it. I think I have heard it was a present from George III. The pieces were picked up and given to me, and I put it together again, and a weary job I had with it, you may be sure. I was almost beat, but I like a difficulty. I don't know that there's any use in my collecting these things, and taking so much trouble," he went on, "for directly I am gone they will be scattered and broken again."

"Not if you leave them to some institution, such as the Museum of the Mechanics' Institution," I suggested.

"I don't know," he continued, doubtfully. "There's such a vast number of folks who don't care for anything old. They will

go and gape at anything new, if it's ever so ridic'ulous ; but there's very few who care for anything old. I expect it will be all scattered," he repeated, casting a glance of regret round the room. Then, returning to a sense of the duties of hospitality, he went on entertaining us. "This is a Sir Joshua," stopping at an unfinished painting of a pretty woman, with a low, square-cut green bodice, unfinished, yet covered with a net-work of cracks, as though it had been baked. "It's a beautiful face, and it's a pity he never got it finished, poor gentleman, for it would have made a grand pictur'. Here's a curiosity," he cried, as he lifted a small thumb'd book, with a silver clasp, from a table that stood below the Sir Joshua. "It is an English Prayer-book, full of wood-cuts, printed at Amsterdam, one thousand six hundred and sixty-seven. You have got the Bible belonging to it," he called to me, with a nod.

I replied I had a Bible of a similar date, printed at Amsterdam, and illustrated with wood-cuts ; but whether it was ever the companion of that particular Prayer-book, I had never properly considered.

"Printed at Amsterdam, at the same time, with wood-cuts ; must be the marrow to it," apparently surprised that I should be so hesitating—"must be the marrow to it," taking another of his mental vaults, and passing on. "That's one of Napoleon's despatches," now pointing to a bit of writing, framed and glazed. "He wrote it himself, on a drum-head, with his own hand. No," he continued, with a shake of his head, in answer to my inquiry whether he could read it to us, "I can't say that I can make it out. For one thing, it is French, and people did not learn French in these parts when I was a schoolboy. But I have heard them who knew something of French read a bit of the first line ; but they never got beyond that. The little tuft in the black frame to the right of it is a lock of Napoleon's hair, and that dark splinter of wood below it is a bit of his coffin. It came to me from St. Helena ; a friend of mine sent it—at least," correcting himself, to give more authenticity to the relic, with an attention to details he ordinarily dispensed with—"at least, a friend of mine brought it from St. Helena to London, and sent it from London to me."

"What on earth can this be ?" cried my friend, breaking out of the order in which we were now going round the room, and peering into a small glass case covering what appeared to be a small piece of dirty petrified sponge. "Oh ! I see. The inscription on the stand says, 'A piece of bread baked on Good Friday, 1779.' Why that is nearly a hundred years ago. How curiously it has shrunk."



Our antiquary, clasping his left wrist with his right hand, and throwing his head backwards as he gazed at the dried fragment under consideration, as though it was a work of art, and he was the most eclectic of connoisseurs, told us there was formerly a belief that bread baked on a Good Friday would never mould; and this piece had been kept to test the truth of the supposition; and, so far, it had not moulded, but had shrunk less and less. It was one of the curiosities his mother had cherished, and, for her sake, he kept it still. Presently he came to a rough brown clay jug, which he told us was a family relic, handed down from something like a Tudor antiquity. His family, in those days, he explained, in an autobiographical manner, that was charming for its unobtrusiveness, were "genteel farmers," and, when nearly everyone eat and drank out of pewter platters and pots, this was one of their possessions. His mother's aunt had set great store by it, as an evidence of ancestral gentility, and given it, with many charges, into her care. "I and my brother were never allowed to touch it," said the old gentleman, as he smiled, bowed, lifted it up, and set it down again slowly, with a lingering impression of its great sanctity. By this time we had come round again to the door, close to which was a large frame, resting on the floor and against the wall, with a curtain drawn across it.

"May we take a peep?" one of us asked.

"Oh, certainly!" rejoined the collector, somewhat disturbed, and covering his confusion with an extra care in replacing some rusty weapons he had showed us a few minutes before. "It is a Venus, by Titian, and as it is nude, and rather startling when any one comes into the room alone, or for the first time, I keep it covered up. It's a grand example of Titian's best days. Some people say it is a Rubens, but, for my part, I am pretty sure it is a Titian."

Just as we were on the point of leaving, he asked whether I had seen the relic that had been found in draining the moor a few days previously, and, after I had replied in the negative, as my friend had began a valedictory inspection of some coins and trade tokens, he inquired whether I had seen the ancient British grave that had been found in ploughing a field the week before.

I explained—"We tried to find it last evening. We went down to the field by the burn, to which we were directed, and looked all over it, but could see nothing of the grave. So we concluded we were looking in the wrong field, and gave it up, the more easily, perhaps, because the clouds were gathering, and it was a long three-miles-walk. But we mean to make another trial to find it. Have the kindness to tell us exactly where it is, so that we may not have another fruitless journey. When we

come to the bridge, ought we to cross over it, or is it in the field on this side of the burn? We looked for it in the field on this side."

"That was right. You don't cross the bridge; but you come close upon it, and on the very edge of the bank leading down to the burn there is the grave; you can't miss it." And then he gave us further explicit directions how to alight upon the exact spot, where some two thousand years before a group of mourners had buried a warrior. He went on to tell us we must not expect to see more than the square empty stone grave. The skeleton that was found in it, with his knees drawn up to his face, so that he might be packed into the square inclosure, and the urn by his side, had both been removed. The men who were employed to take up what was supposed to be only a stone, because it caught every year in the plough, dropped the cover of the cist in their efforts, when it fell into three pieces, one of which smashed the skull of the skeleton they were astonished to see below it. "Everything was taken away, the fragments of the skull and all; but they overlooked one thing, and I got it." So saying, the gentle, genial enthusiast went towards a China bowl, and took out a small screw of paper. "They left one of his teeth behind, and here it is."

It is seldom one friend is quite as much delighted with another as we should like him to be. Hence I was not very much surprised, when we were in the street again, to be saluted rather cavalierly with—"This Don Saltero of yours is more of a curiosity than anything in his collection, as loyal as a cavalier, as zealous as an antiquary, and as free from scepticism as a child. How does he live?"

I had reserved this piece of information for the last, and replied, gratified at being able to produce what I was sure would make an impression—"He lives upon an income that amounts to precisely twenty pounds per annum. Dare we ever grumble at Fortune when we think of this? Isn't it quite a lesson to see his contentment with the present, his tenderness for the past, and his industrious and frugal making of so much out of so little?"

Towards evening the weather turned chilly and threatening again, as it had done on the previous night, and nothing was said in our home-circle about a walk. Great fleets of sullen clouds went slowly sailing by overhead, and the wind began to hoot and moan. It seemed to be the very season for firelight and lamp-light, and the most unseasonable time possible to choose to go and visit a distant rifled grave. But just as my sister stirred the fire, and made the flames leap up cheerily, and the maid was closing the shutters, a ring at the street door announced a visitor.

It was Mr. Gray. He kept one hand in a side-pocket mysteriously, and seemed to be holding something weighty in it; with the other he placed his hat on the ground by his chair.

"You were quite right," he began abruptly, but quietly; "there's not a trace of the grave to be seen. I thought I'd go down myself, and maybe, save you a walk. Perhaps too many people went to see it, and trampled the ground a bit. Anyhow, the cist has been broken up, and thrown over the hedge on to the road, close to the bridge, and there it lays. It's a pity. I suppose they mean to mend the road with it. But," he went on, more cheerfully, producing his hidden burthen from his pocket, "I was determined you should not be altogether disappointed, so I have brought you home a bit of it."



## TOASTS.

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ONE of the oldest, most-honoured, and most popular of our social institutions is that of health-drinking, or, as we now term it, toasting; and although the custom has been inveighed against by many of our most powerful and eloquent divines, by the advocates of temperance and total abstinence, and by an innumerable host of other, no doubt, good and worthy individuals, yet it remains at the present time as firmly fixed in the affections and sympathies of the people as it did in the days of our boar's-head and home-brewed-ale-loving forefathers many centuries since.

Brand, in his "Observations on Popular Antiquities," gives us to understand that the Greeks and Romans used, at their meals, to make libations, pour out, and drink wine in honour of their gods. The classical writings abound with proofs of this. The Grecian poets and historians, as well as the Roman writers, have also transmitted to us accounts of the custom of drinking to the health of our benefactors and of our acquaintances. From the same source we learn that it was the custom of the Roman gallants to drink off as many glasses to their respective mistresses as there were letters in the name of each. And in confirmation of this we find in Martial:

*Six cups to Nævia's health go quickly round,  
And be with seven the fair Justina's crown'd.*

Hence, no doubt, our custom of toasting or drinking healths.

The earliest instance of this custom in Britain which we have on record is that of Vortigern and Rowena. The event is described by Verstegan, in his "Restitution of Decayed Intelligence," published in London, 1673, as follows:—"Hengistus having invited King Vortigern to a supper, at his new-built castle, caused that after supper she came forth of her chamber into the king's presence, with a cup of gold filled with wine in her hand, and making in seemly manner a low reverence unto the king, said with a pleasing grace and countenance in our ancient language, *Waes heal hlaford Cyning*, which is, being rightly expounded according to our present speech, *Be of health Lord King*. . . . The king,

not understanding what she said, demanded it of his chamberlain, who was his interpreter, and when he knew what it was, he asked how he might again answer her in her own language, whereof being informed, he said unto her *Drinc heal*, that is to say, *Drink health*."

William of Malmesbury asserts that the custom first took its rise from the death of young King Edward, called the Martyr, son to Edgar, who was, by the contrivance of Elfrida, his step-mother, traitorously stabbed in the back as he was drinking. Others say that the custom originated at the time when the Danes were masters of this country; deducing the expression "I'll pledge you," in drinking, from the fact that, in those days, the Northmen would occasionally stab a person while in the act of drinking. Wishing to avoid this unwelcome attention, people would not drink in company unless one of those present would be their pledge, or surety, that they should come to no harm while so doing. And in support of this notion there is, in the Cotton manuscript, a curious old illustration, in which several persons are seated at table, the centre one of whom appears to be in the act of drinking the health of one of his companions, who, as a protest that he will stand by and protect him, holds up a knife.

But although the custom itself is of so venerable an age, we find no actual mention of the word "toast," until a much later period. As to the origin of this word, nothing certain or satisfactory is known; and in No. 24 of the "Tatler," we are informed that "the learned differ very much upon the origin of this word, and the acceptation of it among the moderns; however, it is by all agreed to have a joyous and cheerful import."

In 1680 a Captain Ratcliffe put forth a doggrel poem entitled "*Bacchanalia Cœlestia*," which represented Jupiter, with the other deities, on Mount Olympus, as hearing for the first time of a novel beverage recently invented on earth. They determine to try it, and accordingly all the deities unite to compound a bowl of that most seductive of liquors, punch, each god or goddess adding something to bring the liquor to perfection. Apollo supplies the water, Juno the lemon, Venus the sugar, Bacchus the wine, Mars the brandy, Saturn the nutmeg, and—

Neptune this ocean of liquor did crown  
With a *hard sea-biscuit well baked in the sun*.

The toasted biscuit here alluded to is no longer used as an ingredient in the brewing of punch, but from a very early period it formed a favourite addition to many old English beverages. In confirmation of this, we find the word toast used in this sense by many of our old authors. Shakespeare uses it more than once;

thus, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," we find Falstaff bidding his attendant Bardolph—

Go, fetch me a quart of sack; put a *toast* in't.

And in "Troilus and Cressida," we have—

Where then's the saucy boat,  
Whose weak untimber'd sides but even now  
Co-rival'd greatness? either to harbour fled,  
Or made a *toast* for Neptune.

Bacon, in his "Medical Remains," makes use of the word as meaning a piece of baked or browned bread put into liquor.

Take a small *toast* of manchet, dipped in oil of sweet almonds, new drawn, and sprinkled with a little loaf sugar.

Rochester, the profligate favourite of Charles II., when in one of his poems instructing Vulcan how to fashion him a liquor-cup, also makes use of the word—

Make it so large, that, filled with sack  
Up to the swelling brim,  
Vast *toasts* on the delicious lake  
Like ships at sea may swim.

As does Wharton, in his "Panegyric on Oxford Ale,"—

My sober evening let the tankard bless,  
With *toast* embrown'd, and fragrant nutmeg freight,  
While the rich draught with oft-repeated whiffs  
Tobacco mild improves.

So, in Pope, we find—

Some squire, perhaps, you take delight to rack,  
Whose game is whisk, whose treat a *toast* in sack.

And the following old anagram, from Brand's "Antiquities," also shows what was meant by the word—

A *toast* is like a sot; or, what is most  
Comparative, a sot is like a *toast*,  
For when their substances in liquor sink,  
Both properly are said to be in drink.

It was from this use of toasted bread in liquor that we acquired the word "toast," as applied in the first instance to a beautiful woman, whose health was often drunk, and latterly to the act of drinking the health of any person, or to any idea of sentiment. In the number of the "Tatler" before referred to, we find explained how the piece of toasted bread or biscuit in a prepared drink became thus ideally connected with a lovely woman.



“But many of the wits of the last century will assert that the word in its present sense was known among them in their youth, and had its rise from an accident at the town of Bath in the reign of King Charles II.” Before we give the accident here alluded to, we must explain that, at the time referred to, it was the fashion for ladies (females would be the more proper word), dressed in a costume made for the purpose, to bathe publicly in the baths of the city of Bath.

“It happened that, on a public day, a celebrated beauty of those times was in the Cross Bath, and one of the crowd of her admirers took a glass of the water in which the fair one stood, and drank her health to the company. There was in the place a gay fellow, half-fuddled, who offered to jump in, and swore, though he liked not the liquor, he would have the *toast*. He was opposed in his resolution; yet this whim gave foundation to the present honour which is done to the lady we mention in our liquors; who has ever since been called a *toast*.”

The same paper gives an account of the manner of the inauguration of one of these beauties as a *toast*. “It is performed by balloting; and when she is chosen she reigns indisputably for that ensuing year, but must be elected anew to prolong her empire a moment beyond it. When she is regularly chosen, her name is written with a diamond on a drinking-glass. The hieroglyphic of the diamond is to show her that her value is imaginary; and that of the glass to acquaint her that her condition is frail, and depends on the hand that holds her.” It was also the fashion at this period, not only to write the name of the “*toast*,” but also verses in her praise, on the glass.

The word, as thus applied to the person, either male or female, whose health is drunk, is used by many of our old poets and writers. Cotton, in his “*Voyage to Ireland*,” informs us that—

My dinner was ready, and to it I fell,  
I never ate better meat, that I can tell;  
When, having half dined, there comes in my host,  
A Catholic good, and a rare drunken *toast*.

And Pope puts the question,—

—why are beauties prais'd and honour'd most,—  
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's *toast*?

From being thus applied to a person, it gradually came to signify any idea or sentiment, or the form of words in which the health of any person was drunk.

And now, having put before the reader, as far as lies in our power in so small a space, various reputed origins of the word, and how it came to bear its present meaning, let us rapidly notice

a few of these strange effusions, and the curious incidents which have arisen from their use.

During the last century there was a great predilection for all those toasts in which the same words or phrases were repeated several times. One of the most popular ran as follows:—"Here's a health to you and yours, who have done such things for us and ours; and when we and ours have it in our powers to do for you and yours what you and yours have done for us and ours, then we and ours will do for you and yours what you and yours have done for us and ours." Another, of which there were a great many versions, some very complicated and confusing, was

Here's a health to all those that I love;  
 Here's a health to all those that love me;  
 Here's a health to all those that love those that I love,  
 And to those that love them that love me.

One more of this class—not that the supply runs short, for their name is legion, and the only difficulty is in making a selection. This last specimen was generally given by a guest, as a kind of thank-offering to the host, and is somewhat similar to the first instance.

Here's a health to me and mine,  
 Not forgetting thee and thine;  
 And when thee and thine  
 Come to see me and mine,  
 May *me* and mine make thee and thine  
 As welcome as thee and thine  
 Have ever made me and mine.

Toasts of this sort are now altogether out of vogue, probably on account of their being too long, complicated, and tautological.

A toast which is, and ever has been, looked upon as occupying the first place among toasts, and which at all banquets and entertainments of true and loyal subjects, is drunk with three-times-three, is "The Queen" (king, emperor, &c., as the case may be), to which is frequently added "and the Royal Family." This has always been a favourite toast with Englishmen, and its proposal has led to many strange incidents, not the least remarkable of which is that related of Lord Stair. It is well known, but being a good thing it will bear repetition. While that nobleman was holding the post of ambassador to Holland, he frequently gave grand entertainments, to which the foreign ministers—not excepting the French ambassador, with whose court we were not on the most amicable terms—were often invited. As a return compliment, the French ambassador, the Abbé de Ville, invited the English and Austrian ambassadors on similar occasions. The Abbé was a jocular and vivacious man, and particularly fond of

punning. One day, indulging his humour, he proposed a toast in the words "The Rising Sun, my Master!" alluding to the motto and device of Louis XIV. As a matter of course, it was pledged by the whole company. Next, the Baron de Reisbach, in compliment to the empress-queen, gave "The Moon." The turn then came to the Earl of Stair, when that nobleman, with great presence of mind, drank to his master, King William, by the name of "Joshua, the son of Nun, who made the Sun and Moon stand still."

A Lichfield correspondent of "Notes and Queries" gives an account of an ancient and curious custom in connection with this and one other toast observed at dinners given by the mayor and corporation of that city. The first two toasts given are "The Queen" and "Weale and Worship." They are drunk out of a massive silver cup, holding three or four quarts, which was presented to the corporation in 1666 by the celebrated Elias Ashmole, a native of the city. The mayor drinks first, and, on his rising, the persons on his right and left rise also. He then hands the cup to the person on his right side, when the one next to him rises, the one on the left hand of the mayor still standing. Then the cup is passed across the table to him, when *his* left hand neighbour rises, so that there are always three standing at the same time—one next to the person who drinks, and one opposite to him.

Another curious custom was observed some two hundred years ago. Ward's "Woe to Drunkards" (1636) gives us to understand that healths at that time were drunk upon the bare knees. He says, speaking of a lot of low pot-house frequenters, "who never bared their knees to drinke healthes, nor even needed to whet their wits with wine, or arme their courage with pot-harnesse."

In an old play by Thomas Heywood—an author said to have written two hundred and twenty plays, of which only twenty-four are extant—an account is given of the building and opening of the Bourse or Royal Exchange, and Gresham is represented as having purchased a pearl which no one else could afford to buy; and when the Queen comes to visit him, and to name the building, he reduces the jewel to powder, and in a cup of wine drinks it

"Unto his queen and mistress."

Surely, if this is anything more than fiction, the strength of Sir James Gresham's loyalty must have far exceeded the strength of his brains at this particular moment.

But one of the most remarkable collection of "royal" toasts was that put forth at the banquet at Guildhall, given by the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of London, on June 18, 1814, to the Prince Regent and the Allied Sovereigns. Never, within the recol-



lection of Englishmen, had so many royal and illustrious personages met together in England at one entertainment. Among the invited guests were the Prince Regent, the Emperor of Russia, King of Prussia, Prince of Orange, Prince of Wurtemberg, Prince of Bavaria, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Duke of Orleans, Prince Metternich, Duchess and Prince of Oldenberg, Prince of Coburg, and an innumerable host of other princes, dukes, earls, marquises, and other members of the English and French aristocracies. Among the latter were Field-Marshal Barclay de Tolly, General Count Platoff, and Marshall Blucher. The toasts at this banquet were given by the common crier, and were prefaced by a flourish of trumpet. The first, given in the name of the Lord Mayor, was "The King." This was drunk in silence. Then followed in succession "The Prince Regent," "The Queen and the Royal Family," "The Emperor of Russia," "The King of Prussia," "The Emperor of Austria," "The Duchess of Oldenberg," "The King of France," "The King of Spain," "The Prince of the Netherlands," "The Prince of Orange." Then, by request of the Regent, "Our brave heroes by Sea and Land, who have so nobly fought for their country," and "The Illustrious Foreign Heroes of the Allied Armies, who have contributed so much to the Glory of their respective Countries," were given. Upon this latter toast being drunk, Barclay de Tolly, Platoff, and Blucher, rose from their seats and bowed an acknowledgment. The Prince Regent then gave "The Lord Mayor, and thanks to him and the Citizens of London for their magnificent Banquet." In the course of the evening, amongst other music, "Rule Britannia" was sung, and on the singers coming to the line—

"Blest isle, with beauty, with matchless beauty crowned,"

the whole body of guests rose from their seats, and, turning to the ladies who filled the galleries of the hall, sent forth cheer after cheer as a tribute of admiration and respect. Upon this the Regent gracefully concluded this long list of toasts by giving "The Ladies."

Another standing toast, which is given at as many social, as at nearly all political entertainments, is "The Ministry." It was this toast which is said to have called forth Tom Burnett's cutting sarcasm. Being at dinner at the Lord Mayor's, in the latter part of the reign of Queen Anne, after several other healths, the Ministry was toasted. Burnet, instead of drinking, caused a diversion for some time by telling a story to the person who sat next him. The Mayor, not seeing his toast go round, called out, "Gentlemen, where sticks the Ministry?" "At nothing," replied Burnett, and drank off his glass.

As it would require a volume, rather than a few pages, to bring under notice even a tithe of our popular toasts, we pass over, among many others, "The House of Commons," "The House of Lords," "Church and State," "The Bar," &c., and pause for a moment at "The Army and Navy." To this of late years has been added a third service—"And the Volunteers." Until within the last few years, and the advent of armour-plated war vessels, the Navy was frequently given as a separate toast, in the form of "The Wooden Walls of England." It is said that Sir John Hamilton was present at a party given by Major Hobart when he was Secretary in Ireland, where, amongst the usual loyal toasts, "The Wooden Walls of England" was given. Sir J. Hamilton, in his turn, gave "The Wooden Walls of Ireland." The toast being quite new, he was asked for an explanation; upon which, filling his glass, he stood up and, bowing to the Marquis of Waterford and several country gentlemen who commanded county regiments, said, "My lords and gentlemen, I have the pleasure of giving you 'The Wooden Walls of Ireland,' the Colonels of Militia."

Some of the best and most witty toasts have been called forth as answers or retaliations to others proposed at the same entertainment, and which were meant as sarcastic or spiteful hits at some one or more of the persons present. Of this class is the well-known one of Turner's, the celebrated landscape painter. The great artist, although he took little part in society, and only displayed to those with whom he was most intimate the shrewdness of his observations, was possessed of a ready wit. Being at dinner one day where several artists, amateurs, and literary men were met together, one of the party, a poet, by way of being facetious, and as giving the artists present a hard knock, proposed as a toast "The Health of the *Painters and Glaziers* of Great Britain." The toast was, of course, drunk amidst great laughter, in which Turner joined. The painter of "The Rise and Fall of Carthage" then rose, and, after returning thanks for the toast, proposed "The Health of the British *Paper Stainers*," thus giving a very good example of what those must expect who, while themselves living in glass houses, indulge in the dangerous habit of throwing stones.

An incident of this sort is also retailed of Sir Walter Scott. At a literary party, where the great novelist was present, his health was given and drunk, as "The Colossus of Literature." He rose up to return thanks, and gave as a toast, the health of another Scotchman, Mr. McAdam, the reformer of road-making, as "The Colossus of Roads."

A similar anecdote is also on record of Sir W. Curtis, the well-known citizen and magistrate of London. Sir William was

once present at a public dinner where the Dukes of York and Clarence formed part of the company. The president gave as a toast "The Adelphi" (the Greek word for the brothers). When it came to the worthy baronet's turn to give a toast, he said, "Mr. President, as you seem inclined to give public buildings, I beg leave to propose 'Somerset House.'"

A toast which, many years ago, was almost invariably given at dinners, banquets, and entertainments, and which is still occasionally given, is "Wine and Women." In connection with this toast, not long ago, the following appeared in one of the London papers: "At a dinner of certain benchers, it is the custom to drink the toast, 'Wine and Women.' On a recent occasion the chairman announced that he thought the same toast could be performed in terms more complimentary to the profession, and therefore he begged to give them 'Lush and Shee.'"\*

The Revolution, like all other great political movements, gave rise to many party toasts. They nearly all contained a large amount of the horrible, and many of them too much so for insertion here. They were used by the Republican party, both in France and England. The following, which was often given at the meetings of their societies, will give some faint idea of the nature of these effusions: "May the last king be strangled in the bowels of the last priest."

Many ludicrous incidents have occurred through proposing a toast at an improper time or place, or by mistaking the feelings or sentiments of the person in whose honour it was supposed to be given. A curious instance of this kind is given by Captain Gronow in his "Last Recollections." "When the Grenadier Guards returned to London from Cambrai, where they had been quartered some considerable time, the first thing that was proposed by the officers was to invite their Colonel, the Duke of York, to a banquet at the Thatched House, St. James's Street. His Royal Highness, in a letter full of feeling and good taste, in which he alluded to the gallantry of the regiment he commanded, accepted the invitation, and, as was the custom upon such occasions, the army agents of the regiment were also invited. After dinner, Colonel Townshend, commonly called the Bull, addressed the Duke, stating that, as he was then in command of the old battalion, he hoped his Royal Highness would permit him to propose a toast. The Duke bowed assent, when the Bull bellowed out, 'I propose the health of Mr. Greenwood, to whom we are all of us so much indebted.' This toast was ill-chosen, for the Duke of York owed his army agents at that moment nearly fifty

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\* The names of two eminent and well-known lawyers.



thousand pounds; but Townshend considered it a good joke, for he used frequently to boast of having astonished the Duke with his witty toast."

The same writer, in his "Celebrities of London and Paris," gives another illustration of the same kind, but in this case the consequences might, but for the timely interference of the Duke of Wellington, have been more serious than in the instance just given. The author says, "When we were quartered in Paris, 1815, a strange circumstance occurred. It became our duty to provide the guard for the Emperor of Russia, and a dinner was provided for us similar to that which is given at St. James's. Prior to dinner being served, our Adjutant informed the Colonel that there were four Russian general officers in our custody. It naturally struck us that something very horrible had occurred to have caused the disgrace of men of such high rank. It fell to the lot of Captain Vernon, son of the late Archbishop of York, to call upon these unfortunate officers to invite them to dinner—an invitation which they cheerfully accepted. During the first course, the gallant Captain, in proposing the health of one of our prisoners, begged the Russian would inform us as to the cause of their disgrace. The reply was, the Emperor was not satisfied with the manner in which their men had marched past at the review; whereupon Vernon filled his glass up to the brim, and drank, 'Confusion to all tyrants, and—Vive Napoleon!' The Russian Generals appeared thunderstruck, and observed that if they drank the toast proposed, it would cost them their heads. Nothing more was heard of the Russian Generals until two days after, when we (the officers of the guard) were summoned before the Duke of Wellington to explain what it all meant. The Duke having heard us, said he hoped that for the future we would abstain from alluding to Bonaparte, for as Louis XVIII. had been proclaimed the King of France, any allusion to the fallen hero would be both impolitic and mischievous; adding that he would make a point of presenting himself at the Emperor of Russia's hotel, and explaining the occurrence."

An affair of this sort was reported in the daily papers as having happened but a short time since. A son of General Robert E. Lee was present at a dinner-party in Richmond, after the close of the late American war. One of the guests, as a compliment to young Lee, proposed as a toast, "The fallen flag." Colonel Lee promptly placed his hand upon the glass, and arose and said, "Gentlemen, this will not do. We are paroled prisoners. We now have but one flag, and that is the flag of our whole country—the glorious old Stars and Stripes. I can recognise no other, fight for no other, and will drink to no other."

## A PROPHET INDEED.\*

SUGGESTED BY DEAN STANLEY'S SERMON IN WESTMINSTER  
ABBEY, JUNE 19, 1870.

HE Who, at sundry times, in divers ways,  
Hath spoke to man, Who, in the former time,  
Spake by His prophets and apostles, spake  
To all men by His Christ, still sheds His gifts  
Diverse in kind, yet all in harmony.  
To each He giveth of His own to hold :  
He giveth to the Muse her poesy ;  
Giveth to orators their eloquence ;  
Giveth to science its deep scrutiny  
Of things that lie pent in Old Nature's womb ;  
Giveth to moralist and preacher wit  
To point a lesson to his fellow man.

Yet in these latter days one gift of gifts,  
Greater than each, greater, maybe, than all,  
He pours abroad, the blest dramatic power ;  
Imagination, fancy to conceive  
And—far more wondrous—genius to create  
The fiction'd character, to limn the form,  
The manners, actions, and strange ways of thought,  
Of men who live not, e'en as though they were.  
So Shakespeare's wit, and Milton's inner gaze  
Into mysterious space, from God came down ;  
And Scott, thy pictured tales of chivalry,  
That soften, teach, ennoble, humanize ;  
All were to ye the precious grace of Heaven.  
Nor less his gifts, who, 'neath the Minster pile

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\* It is scarcely necessary to remind the classical reader that the word Prophet (*προφήτης*) signifies as often one who speaks publicly and teaches as one who foretells events beforehand.

(That centre and fond heart of English love),  
Now rests and slumbers.

He, with soul and pen,  
Fired by diviner power than e'er he dream'd,  
Taught high and low the lesson of the Christ ;  
Taught us the holiness of poverty,  
School'd roughest natures into tenderness,  
Taught us to weep with them that weep, and joy  
With those that joy ; taught us the pure, the true,  
The loveable, the merciful, the good ;  
Taught us to read the lineaments of God  
In each poor outcast—in the pauper child  
To know a fellow-heir of highest heaven.

Say, was he not a "prophet" in his age ?  
Say, knit he not the bonds of human love—  
The ties of sympathy 'twixt man and man  
That hold across wide intervening seas ?  
Strange power ! mysterious gift ! And cometh not  
Each good and perfect gift from Him alone,  
The great Creator, Who is "Love" itself,  
Who made, and keeps, supports, and loves us all ?

E. W.



## A WOMAN'S VIEW OF AUTHORS AND MATRIMONY.

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My reference to Mrs. Stowe on Byron is for the merest purpose of illustration. The old topics of Macpherson's forgeries, of the authorship of Junius, and of the letters of Phalaris, are, to my thinking, considerably less flat and stale than our latest specimens of literary controversy. Yet, indigestible and unpalatable as this intellectual *entrée* has been made to the British stomach by the strong French *sauce piquante* with which it has been served, the proverbial "good in everything" is still applicable to it. The controversy excited by Mrs. Stowe has served at least to render more than emphatically certain the assurance, old as literature itself, that matrimony is an estate never designed for letters.

It seems, no doubt, hard that the adoption of a liberal profession should be beset by the most illiberal conditions. But, protest as we may, it is but too certain that the standards of life's idealisms are much too low for the idealisms of authorship. Mediocrity may convert the wedding wreath into a halo, and heartily enjoy the fulfilment of the subsequent conditions of the altar. But this is a species of transcendentalism of which literary genius somehow fails to appreciate the sublimity. The truth probably is that the man of letters is unwilling to accept any other conditions than such as are unavoidably imposed by his profession. He snatches enjoyments beyond the reach of conventionality. He circles in eccentric orbits; and, appreciating perhaps his tendency to extinction, assumes, whilst he shines, privileges which may be called meteoric. If good sense were always synonymous with literary powers, the man of letters might probably find the government of the world, as administered by the common folk who form seven-eighths of its population, the most convenient and practicable system of ordering, on the whole, to conform to. But, unfortunately, genius raises men too often above themselves. In gazing upon the stars that fill the heavens, they neglect to heed the bogs that star the earth; and as the feet do not always rise with the aspirations of the mind—unless we except the peculiar instances of men who are hanged for their ambition—it seems imperative that the eye of genius should sometimes be cast down

as well as up, unless genius is willing to endure at frequent periods much commonplace and dirty daubing.

If literary men *will* get married, the obvious moral pointed not only by Mrs. Stowe, but by pretty well every biography in the world, is that they should either write their own memoirs like Gibbon, or supply, like Johnson, such unequivocal memoranda as shall not be complicated into criminal testimony by the most blundering biographer. It is true that a cynical posterity may turn and declare that it is possible to write memoirs which may be full, without containing all that they might hold. But the dead author may slumber secure in the living defence of dates. An *alibi* may be proven, an anachronism exhibited, which shall rescue his character from an odious charge, and preserve the reputation of his descendants. I have read of an ingenious gentleman who sacredly preserved all the love-letters he ever wrote, that, should he one day be accused of a capital crime, he would be in a position to advance the most unquestionable proofs of his insanity. Much in the same way, I think that the man of letters should take care to date all his movements, so that should the Mrs. Stowes of another generation feel disposed to fasten their malignant accusations upon him, his descendants would be provided with material that would either hold them silent, or enable them to exult in a full and triumphant vindication of their progenitor's character.

In the matter of marriage, it is to be considered that there are two to be pleased. It is not often that the woman who marries a literary man, marries him for his literature. She would seldom give twopence for his abilities. They are useful in her eyes, perhaps, so far as they are convertible into money; but they are not so valuable as her father's plate, or her own jewellery, which the pawnbroker will change into cash without need of more than one solicitation. Biography has sometimes wandered into idealisms and pictured the wife as proud of, and exulting in, her husband's genius. But these are pictures I do not credit, unless I am provided with the clearest evidence in support of them. Literary men are *not* admired by their wives. Here and there you may meet women who will tell you what their husbands have just published, and what they are now busy upon, and how warmly or savagely such and such papers praised or abused them. But there is invariably a smack of coercion about all this. You feel that these are *suppressed* women. They talk like subordinated beings. They are compulsorily educated into the knowledge they have; they tell what they know like automatons; there is a mechanical precision in their confessions; and when they have done talking, they seem to shrink into themselves in the consciousness that

they have bored you, well knowing how vastly the same topics have bored *them*. Women of this kind, I am always sure, have arrant egotists for their husbands—men whose domestic conversation is made up of what they have written and what they mean to write; who treat their wives to chapters from their manuscripts instead of to the theatres; and who give them jewels of thought instead of precious stones, which, I believe, they would much prefer. The independent woman, and, perhaps, the typical literary wife, knows very little of her husband outside his domestic character. He is no doubt clever, *and all that*; but she feels that there is a good deal of imposition going on when she reads the idealisms in which his ravished critics wrap him, and grows mightily impatient when she hears her friends tell her and each other how much they envy her her possession of *such a man*.

It is no discredit to a woman's mind for her not to admire her husband, or to admire him in such a manner as to make her admiration a reproach; albeit, the husband may have made himself classical to everybody else. She may be "witty as Lady Mary," and yet read her husband's books without comprehending their purpose, or recognising their merit. The reason may be her husband has made his identification too complete for idealism. In her eyes, the qualities which she best knows, and least likes, leaked into his mind as he wrote; and his volumes to her are nothing more than the reproductions of his objectionable characteristics bound in calf. Marriage, the iconoclast, smashes the pedestal that supports the idol, and the feet of the image are made to tread the dust. The philosopher, the historian, the poet, are inextricably bound up with the vulgar realities of weekly bills, of dissatisfied servants, of monthly nurses, and the anxieties of paternity. Such are the inspirations of matrimony; and the wisest wife will hardly conceal their possession.

But, compared with other reasons that should prohibit the man of letters from treading matrimonial ground, these reasons are trivial. Hitherto I have been dealing with egotism. The literary man has been supposed miserable because he cannot get his wife to admire him. It would involve an unnecessary sarcasm to apply such an inference to the married life of literary men. To be sure it seems a harmless enough vanity to wish to cut a conspicuous intellectual figure in the eyes of one's wife; and perhaps, in reality, such vanity is only discouraged when the wife is not such a fool as her husband. But other reasons have now to be dealt with. A man who cannot command the sympathy of his wife may contrive to live, and live happily, without her sympathy. The negation made of his talents by her want of recognition of them, may be compensated by the genius of domesticity who will



project landing-places for the wife to get a footing on, out of the characteristics of her husband's commonplace life, which may leave them perfectly independent of all higher intellectual sympathy. But I have before said that in the matter of marriage there are two to be pleased. The wife has a voice; she has a claim upon our attention; we must listen to her protests. What is more, we must understand that those protests do often take a deliberate and earnest form. The man of letters is the slave of an exacting mistress. All his time and all his attention are required to fulfil the conditions which she imposes upon him; and these conditions are made all the more exacting by their violation involving generally the ruination of his chances. If these obligations ended with their discharge, the author's wife might have little to complain of. But it will not be denied that these obligations, of which every literary man understands the nature, generate habits and enforce a line of conduct which may be pleasurable enough to the literary man himself, but which are decidedly obnoxious to the literary man's wife. To specify those habits, would be to produce but an indistinct representation of the author's life, inasmuch as these habits, operating far beyond the known and familiar boundaries of conventional existence, defy all attempt at a clear or even a partially accurate specification. Yet such are these habits, that unless the literary man can find a partner animated by kindred sentiments and controlled by similar conditions—and such a partner who would select?—it is certain that no happiness can ever prevail in the author's home.

How is it that the rarest picture to be met with in literary biography is the picture of a happy home? The biographer, eager for the reputation of his subject, and solicitous to represent him in the fairest colours he can produce, is almost invariably brief in his narrative of his hero's wedded life. Complaints are made of our unfamiliarity with the lives of authors' wives; more is reasonably desired to be heard of the three Mrs. Miltons, and the wife of John Dryden, of Mrs. Whitelock and Mrs. Cooper, of Mrs. Hooker, and the spouse of Addison. The insincerity of the biographer witnesses no merit in parlour virtue; and too often a hero is shown to us negatively good by the positive contrast of his wife's badness. This want of charity, which to me seems simply nothing more nor less than gross injustice, tells in reality more against the author than his wife. There need be no difficulty in believing the stories told of shrewish partners; but their enormities are considerably diminished by their provocation being withheld from us. We are told little or nothing of the behaviour of the husbands, of their heedless and intemperate violation of the "social statutes of domestic life," of their tastes which might

disgust a Caliban, or of their habits, which might madden a saint. We are only told that their wives burned their papers, or scratched their faces. To the question *why?* biography returns no answer; and we vainly search for sufficient reasons in works exhaling nothing but angelic sweetness and celestial humours.

Man's mind is small, and literature is large. He who devotes his time to letters, will find but little leisure to dedicate to his wife. No one will censure a woman for exhibiting herself impatient of neglect; and yet neglect is almost inevitably the portion of the author's wife. Nor can I be made to see that the mischief of this negligence is likely to be repaired by the author when reflection and the consciousness of a very serious obligation incurred determine him to assume a more considerate attitude in his relations with his wife. What has he to talk of, if he does not talk of his craft? All his ambitions are there, and his hopes. The things which are uppermost must come first; and these things float and rise from an inexhaustible source. As to unbending and chatting with his wife on matters which his wife understands, and may like to chat upon, the attempt, if it did not actually prove impracticable, would leave the author foolish. How can a man "unbend"—and to unbend to one's wife means, I am willing to confess, to talk the language of *Le Follet* and the gossip of the tea-table—with a history, or a novel, or a biography, threatening him from behind, an innumerable array of articles, pamphlets, essays, clamouring to him for completion on one hand, and a band of surly editors and surlier publishers threatening him with "the workhouse or the gaol," on the other hand? In literature there is so much to be written, that there is very little time for anything to say. There is no profession in the world that bears the faintest affinity to it for exaction. A few years of it do for the mind what a few years of tailoring do for the legs. The soul, saturated with letters, can only talk, think, dream letters. Habit wears a channel, and it is impossible to help the thought from flowing into it. This uniformity of thinking, essential and admirable enough in its way, becomes an impertinence to the wife. She hates to hear of nothing but the roguery of publishers, and the charlatanism of successful writers. Her spirit sickens at the name of articles. She occupies an earth of which the firmament is composed of printed matter, and the soil which she treads of proof-sheets. What is it to her if a quarterly journal devotes forty pages to a review of her husband's treatise on Schüffler's Philosophy of the Unconditioned? What is it to her if an Amsterdam journal declares that her husband is greater than Hobbes, and more learned than Erasmus? She has read J. L.'s letter in the *Times* on her husband's critique on

J. L.'s letter, but she cannot for the life of her see more in J. L.'s letter than it contains. Supposing her husband means to write a comedy for Drury Lane, what then? supposing he means to write a Life of John Wilkes, or Jerry Sneak, what then? Yet all these are the topics of his conversation in his moments of leisure. He leaves his library to go to her; but he carries his subjects with him. He will not lie fallow. He will not talk of the weather, of baby's teeth, of his wife's mantle, or the cook's expensiveness. Should he peradventure degenerate into commonplace, he offers his remarks sicklied over with the pale cast of his calling. He takes a literary view of the crops, talks like an historian of the state of trade, and discourses like a leading article on the ravages of the late gale. No one pities his wife; but if she scratches his face, or burns his papers, there is always a biographer hard by to tell the world of his misfortunes.

The relations between literary men and their wives illustrate what Hazlitt called the "disadvantages of intellectual superiority." It is not often that an author marries a woman for any other accomplishments than those of her person or her fortune. And yet she is no sooner come into his possession than she is expected to exhibit capacities equal to his. She has to have all his enthusiasm, and something more than his discernment; for he reads his manuscripts to her, and looks for criticism that shall help him. On the other hand, when he finds his expectations disappointed, he complains of ill-treatment. He is willing, perhaps, to overlook his wife's absence of sympathy; but he will not forgive her obvious lack of interest in what he calls his affairs. He forgets that he sees further, and knows more than his wife. He forgets, too, that he talks what his wife cannot understand. What he calls his "affairs," really mean his literature; and if his wife cannot sympathise with his mind, she is not likely to sympathise with his aims. As to the belief that people are always flattered by your using big words to them, or starting theses they do not comprehend, I am of opinion that the reverse is the case. I take truth as I find it; and what I have always found to be the truth is, that when you talk your sesquipedalian eloquence to people of ordinary apprehensions, you are not only ridiculed as a pedant and a coxcomb, but avoided as an unintelligible bore. A woman will probably have too good an opinion of her husband to mistake him for either a pedant or a fool; but it is certain that were he something worse than a pedant or a fool, the ever-present aroma of his calling would not oppress her with a more harassing sense of fatigue and disgust.

However angrily the assertion may be called into question by the strong-minded, I repeat that women do not discover any



recommendation in intellectual attainments. A woman may possibly be gratified to discover her lover a man of ability; but you must remember that she fell in love with him before she knew that he had ability. Genius may prove a pleasing ornament, but women seldom care to accept it as a basis. It may be welcomed as a wreath, but it will be rejected as a pedestal. The parlour virtues which make marriage a happiness, are not formed of the qualities that enter into the composition of genius. The man of letters dreams too much to make life the tangible certainty which every woman who marries expects to find it. Nor is the commonplace sufficiently shared; the hard perplexities and minute complications of home life are improperly distributed. The wife's back is loaded with the burden of facts; the husband soars to regions where the shrill cry of the milkman or the baby cannot follow him. The wife has to carry her home, like the snail carries its shell. No wonder she occasionally shows her horns!

You have also to permit the wife a reasonable indulgence of selfishness. She might endure her husband's peculiarities with less impatience could she only see her way to subordinate them to any cheerful purposes of her own. But than his intellectual attainments nothing can be more unavailable. She is even obscured by his brightness. Instead of an ornament, she is hardly a foil. She is always subject, moreover, to the chance of being thought jealous of her husband's powers. People forget that the exhibition of these powers may be familiar to her as household words—that the wit that sets the table in a roar may have been rehearsed before her at a period when the humourist's indiscretion, his habits, or his sins, made his sallies a series of libels on married life.

There are few women who are not what Swift called *mediocrists*. It is not hard to discover the sort of intelligence they like and relish. It is easily inferred from the sort of minds they cannot get on with. The best amongst them cannot sustain a purely intellectual conversation long. They are like learners on a tight-rope; some go further than the rest, but they all tumble off before they have reached half-way. The merits of contemporary writers are their favourite topics of literary conversation. They are pretty safe here, for they have read, and can judge for themselves; and if they praise or blame where praise or blame is manifestly absurd, you are prettily put off with "there's no accounting for taste." But when a woman selected from this large stock of ladies is faced with an author as his wife, she finds her wisdom barely elementary. Her husband's conversation comes upon her like a charade; fragments of meaning are hung up, and she makes herself ill in trying to reconcile them. With ex-

ceptional instances I am not called upon to deal. Biography is generally so one-sided, or meaningless, when it handles the matrimonial experiences of its subject, that you may reasonably decline to accept the obvious and purposeless inferences you are left to draw. There have been authors who have been in this secret of biography, and have befriended their wives by leaving their characters ready-made for posterity. And yet, nobly as Wordsworth has celebrated his wife's virtues, I hope I shall not be thought guilty of irreverence if I meekly inquire with what patience and temper she bore her husband's awaking her night after night to take down good thoughts that smote him in the inconvenient hours? I would also ask what significance are you to attribute to the matrimonial celebrations of poets when the charming dedication to "Queen Mab" is the composition of the husband of a wife whom he shortly after drove into suicide?

My protest against the "intellectual characteristics" of the literary man must not be misunderstood. The man of letters can hardly exhibit himself otherwise than as he is. So great an allowance do I make for the conditions of his calling, that I am perfectly willing he should be as Bohemian in temperament, as eccentric in manners, as singular in conversation, as he pleases. I only say that he ought not to marry. It will be a rare chance indeed if he finds a woman to understand him; and a rarer chance still to find a woman, who, having understood him, shall continue to love him. Let him adhere to his idealisms. Life, so far as he is concerned, will never improve upon them; never supply him with creations more plastic, more docile, more attentive, more gracious, or more endurable. His intellectual harem may be full of such wives, and he shall go through life without a scar on his cheek, or the memory of a quarrel in his heart.

## GEMS FROM CLASSIC MINES. No. II.

PROPERTIUS IV. ELEG. XXI.

“Magnum iter ad doctas proficisci cogor Athenas.”

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I'LL hie me to some distant shore,  
 To Athens, seat of learned lore ;  
 For other climes may chance to heal  
 The rankling wound this breast doth feel,  
 While on my mistress' brow intent  
 More and more keen my soul is bent.  
 Sickened, each cure in vain I try ;  
 What boots earth's best philosophy ?  
 Can rules of sages calm this breast ?  
 Ah, no ! The God forbids me rest.  
 One only cure, one balm remains ;  
 I'll hie me to far distant plains  
 O'er the blue seas, and banish there  
 From soul and thought the phantom fair.

Come, comrades, ply your oars, your sail  
 Spread willing to the western gale ;  
 The salt wave wantons round me now,  
 The sea-breeze fans my burning brow.  
 Ye fading towers of Rome, adieu !  
 Farewell, ye friends so fond and true ;  
 Farewell each vale, each hill, each glade,  
 And fare thee well, deceitful maid.  
 The surge of Adria's stormy bay  
 But bears me further on my way  
 To that fair land where hearts are true—  
 Where all is old, yet all is new.  
 I cross the blue Ionian wave,  
 Those waters that glad Hellas lave ;  
 Flashes Pireus on my sight ;  
 I see, all bathed in glorious light,  
 Walls which shall live for aye in fame,  
 And still record their Theseus' name.



See how around that ancient pile  
Halos of glory seem to smile ;  
In Plato's garden, see, I sit,  
And revel in Menander's wit ;  
Or thoughtful roam through learned groves,  
And meditate on hopeless loves ;  
Or list in mute and fond suspense  
Demosthenes, thine eloquence ;  
Then, lingering in long galleries,  
With pictured heroes feast mine eyes,  
Or, pondering in bewildered maze  
On living statues stand and gaze.  
These be my joys, till, fleeting by,  
Age dims my sense, and dulls mine eye.  
So, Athens, shall thy sunny clime  
And long-drawn interval of time  
Soothe life's decay, and when I die,  
Honoured shall live my memory.

## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

CHAPTER VI.—*continued.*

## VÆ VICTIS.

LAURA looked up with a bright blush upon her face when the door was opened, and the blush deepened when she saw who had entered. But she came forward directly with outstretched hand, and eye beaming with the tenderest sympathy. Arthur too rose, and advanced towards his cousin with a smile of welcome.

But Gerald stood transfixed. His face had suddenly grown rigid and pale, like the face of a corpse, his head was thrown back with a defiant air, and he eyed the couple before him with an expression which was more than half-scornful.

He had come to see the woman he loved, and to gather from her tender sympathy some consolation amidst the great sorrow in which his life had suddenly been enshrouded, and he found his rival, the man whom he unjustly blamed as the cause of half his sorrows, basking in her smiles.

With a woman's tact, Laura read in a moment something of what was passing within his mind; she could not know all, for she had heard nothing of the offer made to Gerald by his cousin; but she knew enough to make her feel that their meeting was embarrassed by Arthur's presence. So, as she uttered those tender words of sympathy which most women have at command in the case of great sorrows, she glanced for an instant at Arthur. She need hardly have conveyed her wish in any such manner. The new baronet was master of a tact far more perfect than any of which she could boast; and there was something almost marvellous in the ease with which, murmuring a few words of farewell, he succeeded in escaping from the room. Before Gerald was aware of it, he had disappeared, and Laura and her boy-lover were alone.

It was with a sister's tenderness that Miss Harcourt took Gerald's hand, and uttered soothing words of comfort in his ear. He heard the words, but he scarcely seemed to heed them. They bore now such a different sound to that which they would have had if he had not seen Arthur. He could hardly bear to listen to

them, apparently ; and there was no softening in the hard lines of his face as he listened to Laura's voice.

"I am sorry I interrupted you and—Sir Arthur Lumley," he said at last, in a cold, ungracious tone.

Laura started back like a wounded fawn, and her eyes filled with tears. She had been exceeding the bounds of conventional etiquette in her desire to comfort her old friend and playfellow, and this was the return she met with !

"Oh, Gerald ! how can you be so unjust as to say that ? You don't know how I have longed to see you, and tell you how much I have felt for you."

"And in the meantime," said Gerald, with a bitter smile, "you have employed yourself in congratulating my cousin upon his good fortune."

"You have no right to speak to me in that tone, sir !" said Laura, drawing back from him with a sudden assumption of *hauteur*, by no means unsuited to the style of her beauty. But when she saw how every muscle of the lad's face quivered with anguish, she relented. "Oh ! Gerald, why are you so cruel and so unjust ?" she said softly, and she laid her hand upon his arm.

Gerald's answer was to seize the shapely white hand, and cover it with passionate kisses. For a moment Laura remained passive, but then she gently, yet firmly, withdrew the hand, saying as she did so, though in no very angry tone—

"You are very wrong, Gerald, to do this."

"Oh, Laura ! have you no pity for me ? You don't know how miserable I am."

"You must indeed be miserable, poor boy ; and I pity you from the bottom of my heart."

"And is it your pity only that I have, Laura ?" cried Gerald, with an emphasis, the meaning of which it was hardly possible to mistake.

Laura's face became almost crimson.

"Say that you love me, Laura ! You know that I have always loved you," pleaded the boy, trying once more to seize the girl's hand.

"You know I have always liked you, Gerald ! I wish I were your sister, and I could show you then how much I like you."

"That's not what I mean, Laura. It's a different sort of love I feel for you, and that I ask from you. I love you a thousand times more than I could have loved a sister if I had ever had one. Won't you love me, my darling ? But no—I forgot, I've no right to ask you. I'm a beggar and a pauper ; and to proffer my love to a lady in your position is to insult you."

The boy uttered these latter words with all a boy's extrava-



gant dignity of manner when he makes a profession which he himself considers a very heroic one ; but there was, nevertheless, not a little hard worldly truth in the statement of which he thus delivered himself.

It was Laura's turn now to become embarrassed. She had seated herself, and was crying softly—after the manner of some women. Gerald saw the tears, and thought he must be a brute to have caused them to flow.

“Forgive me, Laura—I really couldn't help it !” he said, with a *naïveté* that would have been rather amusing to a spectator of the scene.

“I've nothing to forgive, Gerald,” sobbed Laura. “But, oh ! I am so sorry.”

“Why are you sorry ? Did you not want to hear that I loved you ?”

“I never thought you loved me in that way, Gerald ; and you mustn't do so any more.”

A moment before Gerald had been accusing himself of treachery, cowardice, and unkindness in making love to Laura ; now, however, he was as anxious to repeat the offence as ever.

“I can't help it, Laura ! And you know I have always loved you. If you would only say that you loved me, and were sorry for me, I should go away and never trouble you again.”

“I have told you already,” said Laura, “how sorry I am for you. And I do love you—as a brother.”

“You know that is not what I mean,” replied Gerald, almost fiercely. “I can never marry you—never, that is to say, for years and years ; but we could love each other, though we were not married.”

“Gerald, we could never be married ; you must never think of that again—you must never mention such a thing to me,” said the young beauty, once more freezing.

“You love somebody else then, Laura ! You used to like me, and now you don't care for me. I know how it is. My cousin has supplanted me here, as he has done everywhere else.”

As he spoke, Gerald rose from the seat he had taken beside Laura, and stood looking down upon her with a bitter scowl upon his face.

“Gerald,” said Laura, in a broken voice, “I'm very, very sorry for you ; but I can't allow you to speak to me in this way. It's cruel and ungenerous of you to do so. All I can tell you about myself is that, much as I like you, I do not love you.”

Then she, too, rose and prepared to leave the room.

“Stay !” said Gerald, planting himself in her way. “You needn't tell me anything, Laura ; because I have learned to read

your face too closely to mistake its meaning. I know that you love Arthur Lumley, just as well as though I had heard you say so. All I can tell you is, that you will live to repent it."

How much more he would have said, no one knows; for at this moment Laura broke loose from him, and left the room.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE NEW BARONET.

THE London season was dead, and gone to its rest with many another season. The flowers still bloomed in the parks, for the month was September; and though the gay world will hardly believe it, flowers do bloom in Hyde Park at that season of the year. Belgravia and Mayfair were of course "empty," but they were at least very cool and pleasant, and those persons who had not the means of passing the autumn in Switzerland or the Highlands were to be congratulated upon the fact that London was just now a much pleasanter place of residence than during almost any other month of the year.

Amongst other members of society, Sir Arthur Lumley was of course absent from town. He had left England in the middle of July for Paris, and had remained there until the *Morning Post* conveyed to him one day an intimation that "Mrs. Harcourt and family" were at Baden, Mr. Harcourt being detained in town by official business.

Sir Arthur Lumley had been anxiously awaiting this intimation for some time, and he was not long now in following the Harcourts to Baden. Truth compels me to state that he was not very well received. An impression had, somehow or other, got about town at the close of the season, that the new baronet had not behaved quite so well to the youth whom he had deposed, as society would have liked. Happily for him, however, it was the end of the season, and it is needless to observe that one season's sins are forgotten or condoned, long before another season has dawned upon its votaries. When, therefore, Mr. Carnaby Hickson heard that people were inclined to say ill-natured things concerning the new owner of Lumley Park, he contented himself with advising Sir Arthur to spend the autumn abroad, assuring him that long before Christmas the very existence of such a person as Gerald Lumley would have been forgotten.

Arthur accordingly went to Paris, where through the influence of his wealth, his title, but more than anything else his wonderful faculty for pleasing, he succeeded in spending a very pleasant

time, until the *Morning Post* gave him the signal for a flight to Baden.

If his reception at Baden in the first place were somewhat ungracious, he was not very long in placing himself on a different footing with the family whose friendship he courted. Mrs. Harcourt was not the most strong-minded woman in the world, and though she was at first very sorry for Gerald, and inclined to be rather indignant at the conduct of his cousin, she was not long in succumbing to Sir Arthur's fascinations. The baronet laid himself out specially to please her, and he succeeded. Moreover he succeeded at the same time in winning the favour of the other members of the family. Within a fortnight of his arrival at Baden, you might have heard round the breakfast-table of the Harcourts a perfect chorus of praise in honour of the youth whose winning smiles and gentle manners won all hearts. Mother and sons, alike, were convinced that he had been very scurvily treated by rumour, and were even inclined to believe that poor Gerald had acted very improperly in rejecting the aid which he had offered to him.

Laura did not join in this chorus of praise. As became a well-bred British maiden, she was silent when her brothers sang the virtues of a man, young and unmarried. But Laura had never condemned Sir Arthur Lumley as the others had done; on the contrary, when she was compelled to listen to the depreciatory remarks which they at one time uttered concerning him, she had said nothing, but her cheeks glowed with a colour which would have seemed suspicious to any eyes which had observed it. Perhaps it was well for her that her brothers had passed the age of Tom-boyism. They were too much occupied now in their own little flirtations: in the cut of their clothes: and the prospects of their betting-books, to have any time to waste in the study of a sister's face. Laura, therefore, blushed unseen.

When Sir Arthur Lumley, accordingly, made a conquest of the rest of the family at Baden, there was no need for him to conquer Laura's heart. It was already captive to him. He had taken it months ago, with his sunny smile, his handsome face, his soft voice. Gerald was right when he charged her with loving his cousin. It remains to be seen how far he was right in his prediction, that she would repent of ever having done so.

When Miss Harcourt had first felt the influence of Arthur's fascinations, she had striven against it stoutly. A penniless captain was, she knew, no match for her; and though her parents loved her, she was convinced that they would never give their consent to her marriage with a man whose position was so far inferior to her own. But all that was changed now; and you will



hardly be inclined to blame Laura, when I tell you that her heart beat fast with secret pleasure, when she knew that Sir Arthur Lumley had reached Baden.

He had gone there to woo her. Some hidden instinct told her this; and the instinct told her rightly. Lumley was determined to win her as his wife, and he was resolved to do so, despite the fact that he would have, as he was sure would be the case, the unrelenting opposition of her father.

I might draw some very pretty scenes, if I were inclined to do so, of the love-making which went on between the handsome pair at Baden. But love-scenes, I fear, are beginning to 'pall upon the public taste, therefore I forbear. Arthur was an ardent wooer; and knowing, as the reader does, the state of Laura's feelings towards him, no one will be surprised at the fact that within three weeks of his arrival at Baden, he had received from that young lady permission to communicate with her father upon the subject of his hopes. Laura, of course, did not wait for the answer to the letter which had been duly dispatched to Balmoral, where Harcourt then was, before she made known the news with her own mouth to her mother. Mrs. Harcourt was pleased and sympathetic. She loved her daughter, and she had learned to entertain a real liking for Sir Arthur Lumley. Moreover, the baronet was, so far as wealth and position were concerned, in every way a suitable husband for Laura. She was inclined to consider the matter settled at once, and would have consented to look upon Arthur as her future son-in-law without waiting for the answer of Mr. Harcourt, if it had not been for the intervention of her sons, who, in the prospect of so important an event as the marriage of their sister, were determined that everything should be done properly and in due form. They did not anticipate that their father would offer any opposition to the match; but it was only right that he should have the opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it, before it was finally arranged.

Mr. Harcourt was terribly mortified when he got the news. Like most fathers, he had continued up to that time to think of his daughter as a mere child, and had never cared to associate the idea of marriage with her, or at least had thought of it as something still far off in the future. Of course, fathers who make this mistake, must be prepared for a rude awakening some day, and must make up their minds to submit as graciously as they can to the loss of their daughters. As a rule they perform their duty, and submit to the sacrifice with a heroism which is by no means sufficiently appreciated. They see the young ones whom they have reared and cherished, and from whom they are only

now beginning to receive some return for all the care and affection they have lavished upon them, take flight one after another from the old nest; and though they may heave many sighs as daughter after daughter goes joyfully to other scenes, they submit with that stolid indurance with which Englishmen submit to any trials, however grievous they may be, which have the sanction of popular custom. Mr. Harcourt, therefore, would doubtless very soon have made up his mind to Laura's marriage, and given his consent to it with tolerable equanimity when the first shock of the unpleasant surprise was over. But it was a different thing when the husband proposed for his daughter was such a man as Arthur Lumley.

We have seen how the statesman sided with Gerald in the dispute, if it could be called such, with his cousin. With his keen sense of honour, and his generous instincts, Harcourt was disgusted at the pinching meanness which Arthur displayed. He saw in a moment through the flimsy covering of an ingratiating manner in which the young man had wrapped himself—saw that under this outer veneering of grace and beauty, he was shallow, weak, heartless. To see his daughter wedded to such a man would be to him a life-long misery. He would infinitely rather have seen her married to Gerald the penniless, and the nameless.

He wrote to the baronet, coldly refusing to give his consent to the proposal that he had made, and he wrote at the same time to his wife, rebuking her for having allowed the intimacy between the young people to assume such a form, and requesting her to return at once to England.

Mrs. Harcourt had never received such a letter from her husband before, and she was both astonished and indignant at the tone which he chose to adopt. She resented it—not bitterly, for she was a loving wife, having all the confidence in her husband's judgment which such a woman ought to have, but mournfully, and secretly she sided with her daughter, and with the handsome youth who had won her daughter's love.

So then discord entered into this family, in which hitherto peace had reigned supreme; and it entered, as is too commonly the case, through that very love which poets sing, and which men and women of every rank and clime and age have united in adoring.

There was a tearful parting scene between Laura and her lover when the Harcourts left Baden. For though Mrs. Harcourt did not sympathize with her husband in his prejudice against Arthur, she felt herself bound to comply with his wishes, and one of those wishes was that for the present there should be no intercourse whatever between his family and Sir Arthur Lumley.

Therefore the young people had to submit to separation, and they did so after the ordinary fashion of young couples on such occasions—that is to say with many sighs and promises, and vows of eternal constancy.

Laura's heart was very bitter at the sudden check which she had sustained. It was the first time that the proud young beauty had met with such a blow, and she thought very hardly of her father's conduct. She had given all her love to Arthur, and she felt that she could never love again; therefore, although she obeyed Mr. Harcourt's wish, she did so with a sore heart, and in the full belief that henceforth, however long she might live, life would be a dreary and a painful thing to her. To love once, and to love always, was her idea of the grand passion, and it seemed that her father was guilty of deliberate cruelty in interposing this stern edict between her and her lover. Poor fathers! how much you have to suffer.

All the Harcourts—all, that is to say, except the head of the household—were agreed that Arthur Lumley's conduct in the trying circumstances in which he was now placed, was perfection itself. He uttered no words of complaint or of reproach. He accepted his rebuff mournfully and sadly, it is true, but with a gentle air of resignation that touched Mrs. Harcourt's heart more even than her daughter's indignant protestations. He had not a hard word to say of the man who had destroyed his hopes. He assured them all that there was no man in the world for whom he had so high a respect as for Mr. Harcourt, and he seemed to be almost as much moved by the thought that he did not possess that gentleman's confidence, as by the prospect of losing Laura.

Arthur was a man of the world, and he knew that there are times when a foe is far more dangerous in his weakness than in his strength. He felt that such a time had now come to him, and he wooed not Laura but her mother, with a skill and a persistency which made that lady more than ever his partizan, and sent her back to England fired with the resolution that, come what might, she would not rest satisfied until she had secured her daughter's happiness.

Where is the father who can sustain unaided, for any length of time, a struggle of this kind? Show me such a man, and I will show you a man who has not only an indomitable will, but a heart cased in triple-hardened iron. Harcourt had the will, but he had not the insensibility of feeling necessary to secure his success. He could not play the part of a domestic tyrant; he could not endure the sight of cold or melancholy faces round his table. Against wife or child alone he might have struggled successfully, strong in the conviction that he was fighting for her



good, but against wife *and* child, against all of his own household in fact, he could not maintain the unequal contest.

I am afraid he was very miserable at this period of his life, and I confess that I feel a strong sympathy with him. It is a bitter draught which the husband and father has to swallow, when he feels that in doing that which is for the good of those he loves, he is alienating them from himself, is losing that very love which is so precious to him. A bitter draught indeed ! quite as bitter as many which attract to those who have to partake of them a much larger amount of notice and of sympathy. To me it appears there is hardly a sight more touching in the world than that presented by the quiet middle-class father who devotes himself to his family, who toils early and late that his sons may go to Rugby or to Cambridge, that his daughters may get their dresses from Worth, and that his wife may have her carriage, and her box at the opera. Such a man will wear shabby clothes himself ; will spend the weary hours of the hot summer day bent over books and letters in a fusty office ; will undergo all manner of commercial perils ; will even condescend to execute some piece of sharp practice at the expence of his oldest friend—and all for what ?—that his wife may think him rather stingy, his daughters may come to look upon him as the tyrant who steps in to forbid their union with Adolphus the handsome, or Victor the brave, and that his sons may speak of him contemptuously as “ the old boy,” and frame ingenious excuses to save themselves from the pain of being seen in his company in Bond Street or the Park. I protest, good reader, that these care-worn old “ city men ” are to my mind the real heroes of our time—infinitely more heroic in their lives and in their self-renunciation than the young gentlemen who from the height of a juvenile passion look down upon them as fossils long past all feeling.

It was but the other day that the present writer, coming up to town by the Great Northern Railway, had for his companion such a man. He was shabbily-dressed, of course ; he was growing old, he had never been very handsome, there was nothing in his appearance to attract sympathy or admiration. But we grew friendly over our cigars, and before I parted from my fellow-traveller, at King’s Cross, he had unfolded to me just such a story of domestic trouble as that which I have been suggesting. The coat he wore was the best he had in the world, he said ; his time was spent in long railway journeys from one end of England to another ; for weeks together he had to live in the commercial-rooms of Yorkshire hotels. And whilst he was submitting to this, his wife and daughter were living at ease in their detached villa—(poor soul ! he told me everything)—at St. John’s Wood,

They had their cook, their housemaid, their own maid, and their page. His daughter had eighty guineas a-year for her dresses—my friend's coat would not have brought more than half-a-crown in Phil's Buildings—and he never grudged them anything which money could buy. But—and his eyes filled with tears as he told me—he could never induce his daughter to write to him. She was always busy with her fancy work, or her German lessons, or the visits of friends; she had no time to write a few words of love to the father travelling amongst the rude manufacturing communities of the north. "The fact is, sir," said he, "I had to meddle with a love affair of hers last year, and home has never been what it used to be to me since then. They think I behaved very badly, and they can't forgive me."

As I heard this story—somewhere between Peterborough and London—I could not help thinking that here was your real tragedy of life, and wishing that a worthier pen than mine would undertake to celebrate it.

This is a long digression, but it gives us some idea of the position which Mr. Harcourt now held in his own household. He stood alone amongst the people he loved; and, strong-minded though he was, he could not bear the trial which thus befel him. So there came a time, when the sere autumn leaves were littering the lawn at the Eaves House, when he found himself once more caressed with the old warmth by wife and daughter, when he was once more petted and made much of, and when he submitted to this renewal of love half-gladly, half-sadly, feeling his heart warm under these manifestations of tenderness, but feeling also that he was half a traitor to his child in succumbing to her influence. For he had yielded, and given his consent to Laura's marriage with Sir Arthur Lumley.

The successful lover was at Lumley Park when the news of his good fortune reached him. He had gone thither from Baden, and had remained there during the autumn. He had written to Mr. Harcourt an earnest, but respectful letter, entreating him to reconsider his decision, but promising that for the present he would take no step of which he did not approve; and in the meantime he had busied himself in mastering the affairs of his vast estate.

All things were prospering with him. The entailed property he inherited from his uncle was in the best order; the rent-roll was even larger than he anticipated, and, though there was at first some slight disposition on the part of the magnates of Midlandshire to treat him with coldness, as an interloper, the fact that he was the master of an estate worth nearly twenty thousand a-year, and that he was unmarried, soon had its due weight.

Lady Redborough, the wife of the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, was first to set the example of showing him a cordial friendship. Lord Redborough was notoriously poor, and he had three unmarried daughters ; he was not sorry, therefore, when the Countess asked him to call upon Sir Arthur Lumley, and to invite him to join the company at the Castle.

Arthur only needed such an opportunity in order to make his position good, and very soon he was as popular in Midlandshire as he had been everywhere else ; and, from the Ladies Alithea, Cassandra, and Geraldine de Bray, down to the humblest tenants upon the Lumley estate, there was no one who was not loud in the praises of the new baronet.

I forget. There was one exception. An old man—a very old man now—to whom the reader has already been introduced, Peter Dawson, the uncle of the helpless Phœbe, Lady Lumley, whose history has already been sketched in these pages, was that exception.

How it came about that a man who was anxious to please everybody, and who generally succeeded so completely in doing so, should have failed to ingratiate himself with the chief agent upon his own estate, I cannot pretend to say. But from the first Sir Arthur Lumley disliked Dawson, and the latter hardly made a secret of the fact that he reciprocated the sentiment. They were on their guard against each other, it is true ; but it was manifest that the baronet would not be sorry to lose the services of the man who had spent a lifetime in the service of the Lumleys, whilst the agent showed none of that dog-like devotion to the interests of Sir Arthur which had given him so high a place in the esteem of Sir George Lumley. On the contrary, old as he was, the air of humble dependence, and even of servility, which he had so long worn, seemed to leave him from the day on which the new baronet entered upon the possession of the property ; and in its place there appeared an independent bearing, very strange in the case of such a man.

This was the position of affairs when Sir Arthur Lumley was allowed to visit the Eaves House in the character of the betrothed husband of Laura Harcourt.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GENTEEL POVERTY.

THE months during which the Harcourts were at Baden, and Arthur Lumley was wooing Laura, were dreary months of almost sickening despair to Gerald. All the excitement of his sudden



change had vanished, and in its stead there was only the blank reality of poverty and misery. He had left his father's house almost without a penny. His little money was soon spent; his watch, his trinkets, even his books, were sold in quick succession, in order to meet the expenses of his life in the wretched lodgings to which he had gone, and when these had been parted with, it seemed to Gerald that nothing but starvation stared him in the face. The reader need not be alarmed, for there was, of course, no danger of any such fate overtaking him. Mr. Harcourt was watching the boy closely, and was even now looking about for some means of serving him to the best advantage. But meanwhile Gerald was discovering what poverty really was. Nursed in luxury, he had never had a conception of such a thing as genteel poverty. He had known, of course, that the beggars he met in the streets were poor; but they were beings so entirely different to himself, that they seemed to belong to another species. But it had never entered into his mind that any one with the feelings and tastes of a gentleman could be the victim of absolute want. His own sufferings first gave him this knowledge, and though the experience by which he bought it was bitter, the lesson was wholesome.

What hopeless days, what sleepless nights, he passed, none knew but himself. Years afterwards, when the shadow of those dark times had almost ceased to be remembered, Gerald could never look back upon the first three months of his life after his father's death without a shuddering horror, accompanied by a feeling of the most profound pity for his former self. To rise, day after day, to a world which was absolutely dark, in which it seemed to him that no face was friendly and no hope possible, and to fall to sleep nightly longing for the deeper sleep of death, from experiences which few human souls have to pass through in the journey of life, but which fell to Gerald's lot at this time.

That which saved him at last from utter despair was the discovery that there were beings yet more forlorn than himself. He used to wander, sometimes for whole nights through, in Hyde Park, and there he heard from the lips of shivering wretches, whose condition was appalling in its horrors, such tales of woe and suffering as no English novelist has ever yet ventured to record. He went down into the very depths of the dark life of the London outcasts, male and female, and was made acquainted with more of the tragedy of life than it had ever entered into his life to conceive before. In this way he found that, miserable as he was, there were others still more miserable. He at least had youth, strength, and freedom from the taint of sin, and, having these

things, he was absolutely rich compared with most of the degraded slaves to drink or lust with whom he thus became acquainted.

He became at last, in a certain measure, the friend and confidant of many of these poor souls. They saw that he was miserable, but they saw also that he was not as they were, and they used to creep to him for comfort and sympathy, treating the boy with an almost childlike confidence and trustfulness. It was a strange revolution that had been effected in his character. The head-strong, wilful, proud lad of a few months back consorting with beggars and harlots; finding his companions amongst those from whom even policemen shrank away with horror. It was but another instance of the fact that poverty brings us into strange company.

Amongst those with whom he became friendly was a girl, little older than himself in years, but aged beyond comparison with him by a life of vice and misery. Ellen, as the girl was called by her companions, used to watch the lad timidly when he entered the park in the dusk of the evening, and, waiting until she saw that he was quite alone, she would venture to draw near and speak to him. Poor wretch! Gerald, still young and innocent, loathed the sin of which she had been the victim, but for her he had only compassion. They sometimes sat together for hours, whilst she told him bits of her past history, of her old home in some distant village; of her parents, honest, hard-working, God-fearing; of the first meeting with the man she loved, and the days of sunshine which followed. And then, with wild, hysterical excitement, she would tell of the darkness which presently came upon her life, her passion gradually rising higher and higher, till her shrill, unwomanly voice seemed to pierce the leaves over head and to ascend to heaven like a prayer for vengeance. But always she concluded in a low, wailing voice—

“I have a sister at home—a little sister, sweet and pure as the babe new born. Oh, God! oh, God! if she ever should fall as low as I have done! I’d sooner kill her with my own hand than that she should do so.”

It was this sister, always this sister, to whom she came back after her long stories of misery; and Gerald, who, boy-like, was fascinated by the fact that he was made the repository of a soul’s inmost secrets, came at last to believe that he was, in some measure, the guardian of Ellen’s sister. The girl used to ask him to swear to save her if he ever met her and found that she was in danger of falling, and she used to ask him, too, to swear that, if this sister ever did fall, he would be her avenger. He promised both things; and yet he did not know this sister’s name, or where

she was to be found, for when he asked Ellen on this point she used to cry—

“No, no, not yet! I shall die soon, and before I die I’ll tell you all. But it’s too soon yet to bring sorrow and shame upon my father’s name.”

And then he would tell her his own story, and she, forlorn as she was, would comfort him even as he had comforted her.

One evening, in that very month of September in which Arthur was enjoying himself in the society of the Harcourts at Baden, Gerald, unable to rest in his lodgings, turned into the park to spend the night in the open air. His case seemed to him absolutely desperate now, for his last penny and his last piece of property had alike gone to pay his landlady, and he knew not where any longer to find bread. Mr. Harcourt had almost thrown money upon him before he left town. He had, indeed, made a futile effort to take Gerald down to Eaves House when he was on his way to Balmoral, and he had previously offered him a clerkship in the office of which he was the Parliamentary chief. Gerald had, however, stoutly rejected all these tenders of aid. He was determined now, as much as he had ever been, to get on in the world without help from any of his father’s friends. But it almost seemed now as though he would starve before the “getting on” actually commenced; for, in spite of all his efforts, he had been quite unable to obtain work of any sort.

He was wondering as he slowly paced one of the main walks of the park whether he would not end by falling as low as any of the miserable creatures with whom he had there become acquainted, when his reverie was suddenly interrupted by some one addressing him.

“I beg your pardon, but can you tell me if the gates at the corner will be closed? I’m afraid I’m shut in. I’ve been sitting on one of the benches, smoking, and didn’t think how the time was passing.”

The stranger was a tall, well-built man, about forty years of age, whose speech betrayed the fact that he was born north of the Tweed.

“Oh, the gates would be shut half-an-hour ago, at least,” said Gerald.

“Phew!” whistled the other, whilst, by the moonlight, Gerald saw that a genuine expression of dismay spread itself over a broad, good-natured face. “That’s a fine business! And what shall I tell my wife when I get home to-morrow morning? She won’t believe me whatever I may tell her; so that’s one comfort.”

“Are you very anxious to get out of the park at once?” asked Gerald.



"Well, as to that, I am and I'm not. I should rather like to spend a night here amongst the rascallions who swarm on the grass; it would be a new experience in my line. But, on the other hand, there's a very good chance of having your throat cut, I'm told; and I'm not prepared for that yet. Moreover, there's Mrs. Brown; if I did get my throat cut, she would believe I'd done it out of pure perversity, in order that she might have the pleasure of working for her living; and if I didn't, she'd swear I'd been where I ought not to have been, and would take a precious long time to forgive me."

"Then, upon the whole, you would rather get out of the park as soon as you could?"

"Well, upon the whole, yes; but—" pursued Mr. Brown, with a meditative air, "upon second thoughts, no. At least, not until we've smoked a cigar together."

"Thanks," said Gerald; "I shall be glad of your company for half-an-hour, and after that I can show you where the railings can be climbed, so that you may escape."

"And do you not want to escape also?" asked the other; "or are you bent upon investigating the mysteries of the parks?"

"Oh, I have become only too well acquainted with their mysteries. I often spend the night here."

"By Jove! I wonder at it," was the response of the other, as in the moonlight he endeavoured to search Gerald's face for an explanation of his character.

"You are too young to be married," he continued, "or I should have said that was the reason why you chose such strange quarters. But pardon me. Perhaps I'm trespassing when I've no right to do so. You have a match? You will find the cigar a good one;" and therewith, in rich baritone voice, the stranger began to roll forth some Scotch drinking song.

Gerald saw that his new friend was not what the polite world would describe as a gentleman. There was a touch of the shrewd Scotch tradesman about him; but there was a still broader touch of the Bohemian, and the two characters, opposite though they may at first sight seem, were admirably blended together by a genial good nature, equally expressed in the tones of his voice, and the smile which was ever flitting across his face, as he told Gerald one story after another, apropos of nothing at all, all of which stories had about them something of a Rabelaisian flavour.

"I'm no college-bred man," said Mr. Brown, presently. "And I'm not one of your infernal cockneys, as I daresay you perceive from my voice. But, sir, though Tom Brown says it, who should not say it, Tom is a true man. I see you're in trouble, youngster; forgive me for mentioning it to you, but believe me,

it won't do you any good to moon about the park amongst the sculduddery of London of a night. I don't know what your trouble is, though I can partly guess;" and the speaker's eyes wandered to the black band on Gerald's hat,—“but whatever it may be, don't give way to it, my boy; fight it like a brave man, as I'm sure you are.” And therewith Tom Brown brought a broad hand down upon Gerald's shoulder by no means lightly.

There was something about the man which the lad could not help liking, despite the roughness of his manner and the occasional coarseness of his speech. No one could mistake the genuine kindliness of the shrewd Scotchman's tone as he uttered these words, and poor forlorn Gerald's heart seemed to warm and expand under them.

“I *am* miserable—very miserable,” he said, in response to the other. “There are more miserable wretches than I am within a few yards of us, however.”

“Ah,—yes. I don't doubt that. We've got into the land of pariahs and outcasts, and I daresay we might see some sore sights if we chose to open our eyes to them. But”—and Brown's features relaxed once more into a smile—“I'm no Samaritan, and I don't pretend I can bind up the wounds of these poor wretches, or give them ease with my pennyworth of oil. I'm a Pharisee, with a good broad-cloth coat upon my back, and righteousness writ large upon my bosom in the shape of a clean shirt-front; and you're a Pharisee, too, my lad, though I daresay you don't think so; and it's because you are that I have a fellow-feeling for you, and should be glad to help you if you would let me.”

“I don't know how you can help me. I'm beginning to think my case is past mending.”

“What! at your age, with health and strength, and the bearing of a gentleman! My boy, you'll some day feel ashamed of having thought this. What are you?”

The blunt question would have been received by Gerald from anybody else as an intolerable insult; but Brown's voice and manner had so won upon him, that he took it quite as a matter of course, and said, with a meekness that was strange to him—

“I'm nothing at all; that is, I'm a gentleman.”

Brown laughed a light, cynical laugh, and blew a huge cloud of tobacco smoke from his mouth.

“Truly a pleasant occupation, and one for which I have myself a great calling; but, for all that, it is not quite so profitable as some of us would like it to be. I haven't yet found how a man can be a gentleman on less than eight hundred a-year.”

“I meant to say that I was a gentleman by birth and educa-

tion," said poor Gerald, with a dull consciousness of the fact that some persons might even object to his saying so much as this.

"You didn't need to tell me that, sir," was the reply, uttered in more respectful tones than any which Brown had used hitherto. "But I should like to know if you follow any profession, and how you are placed."

Then Gerald told something of his history, concealing everything but the fact of his father's death, and his own friendlessness and poverty. How great a trial it was for the proud, headstrong lad to tell the story to this new-found friend, even though the night-clouds hid from the other his burning cheek and dimmed eyes, few persons can conceive. However, the story in this mutilated form was told at last, and Tom Brown knew that he was talking to one who, though a gentleman by birth, was absolutely penniless, and was looking for work as a means of escape from starvation.

When he had heard the tale, Brown walked on rapidly towards that weak point in the park fence which Gerald had promised to show him. He said nothing, and our hero was already regretting that he had given the stranger his confidence. When the edge of the park was reached, he indicated the means of exit, and held out his hand to Brown.

"Oh!" said the latter, with the utmost coolness, "we arn't going to part yet. Come along, youngster; I intend that you shall spend the night more pleasantly than on the grass of Hyde Park." With that he climbed the railing with more agility than one would have supposed possible, and stood waiting on the other side. Gerald hesitated a moment, and seemed more than half disposed to retreat towards the centre of the park; but Brown waved his hand towards him authoritatively, and, obeying the command, the lad soon stood beside him on the Knightsbridge pavement.

"Now for a cab," cried Brown, hailing the first hansom, and very quickly they were [dashing across Leicester Square in the direction of Covent Garden. The cab drew up in front of a quiet-looking tavern in a retired street between the Strand and Covent Garden.

"You were never at 'the Duke's Head' before I suppose? Ah! you young swells lose a great deal by your swelldom; but you'll soon be free of the place now if Tom Brown can make you so."

He led the way into an upper room with sanded floor and oaken benches in which at that moment half-a-dozen men were engaged in smoking pipes and drinking sundry liquors, hot and colourless, from the glasses before them.



They were nearly all young men—younger than Brown. Some of them were evidently gentlemen in manners and bearing, whilst it would have been a stretch of politeness to say as much of one or two others. All evidently knew Brown well, and they hailed his appearance with a general shout, and then turned somewhat inquisitively upon his companion, who stood shyly beside him, secretly indignant at having been forced into this unexpected company.

“Now then, boys,” cried Brown, in commanding tones, as though he were accustomed to exercise authority in the place, “I hope you haven’t missed me, for I can assure you I have not missed you. I have spent the evening far too pleasantly in the company of my friend here, Mr. Dangerfield”—and Brown coolly indicated the astonished Gerald as he spoke—“to have felt any regret at not being here. What will you drink, Dangerfield?”

“Ah! and vot vill *de* General drink?” said a dapper little waiter who had entered the room, and who seemed to be on the best terms with everybody in it. “I vill attend to dis gentleman directly; but *de* General comes *de* first.”

“Bring some ‘Irish, cold,’ and keep your tongue quiet, you scoundrel,” was the answer of “the General,” whom we know as Mr. Brown. “But attend to this gentleman first.”

The whole scene was one entirely new to Gerald, whose experiences of Bohemianism were limited to very occasional visits to Evans’s. There was an absence of ceremony, and even of the common forms of polite speech amongst this company, which was at first, it is true, rather startling to him; but he very quickly perceived that this freedom from the conventional usages of society was a piece of affectation more than anything else; whilst it required no study to enable him to see that everybody was on excellent terms with everybody else.

Howard, the waiter, was fully occupied in replenishing the glasses, and bringing fresh pipes and cigars to the company, whilst those who composed it, were engaged in incessant talk, of a kind which was rather bewildering to Gerald. For nearly all their conversation was of matters concerning which he knew nothing. They spoke of newspapers a good deal, of books a little, and of theatres, actresses, and a mysterious place with which one or two of them seemed to have very close dealings, but which they designated by no name save that of “the gallery.”

Their conversation was not very brilliant, or very witty, or very wise. More than once it was coarse to an unpardonable degree; but at least it was for the most part kindly and genial, and at odd intervals sayings were uttered which would have made the fortune of any dinner-table talker in Belgravia. There was no

sort of exclusiveness about the men. They admitted Gerald at once, and without question, to the inmost circle of their friendship; they listened to him attentively when he spoke, which was but seldom, and if any of them had a particularly good story to tell, he singled out Gerald as the man to whom it was to be specially told. In short, with that good nature which is after all better bred than the finest of artificial gentlemen, they succeeded in setting the stranger thoroughly at his ease, and bringing unwonted smiles to the face upon which care had so early stamped its mark.

Presently he found himself studying one man, apparently just on the sunny side of thirty, whose face, a model of manly beauty, was perhaps at this moment somewhat flushed as a consequence of the evening's drinking.

This man, whose bearing and manner were entirely those of a gentleman, did not speak quite so frequently as most of his companions, and when he did speak it was rather to criticise their conversation than to make any original observations of his own. But his remarks were so shrewd, so keen, and so witty, that Gerald was insensibly attracted by them, and he found himself giving this man a much larger share of his attention than he bestowed upon any of the others. When the critic, whose name was Redwood, saw this he drew nearer to our hero, as though the attraction were mutual, and very soon they found themselves in close conversation. They exchanged confidences, not about themselves, but about their sentiments on all those topics which interest young men, with all the freedom of youth, and before the hour had come at which Howard announced that the bar was about to be closed, something like a friendship had been struck up between them.

"Now, Dangerfield," said Brown, as the merry company was slowly dispersing, "you must promise to come and see me to-morrow morning before I part from you. I shan't let you go on any other condition. You will find me, as sure as my name's Tom Brown, at the *Sentinel* Office, Boswell Court, Fleet Street, at half-past ten o'clock. Will you come?"

"Yes," said Gerald, who in spite of his sufferings had really enjoyed the strange experiences of the evening.

"That's all right, then; and now, my boy," continued Brown, speaking in a low tone, "I hope you are going home, and not thinking of trying the park again to-night."

"No; I shall go home now," was the reply, and warmly shaking hands with Brown and Redwood, Gerald turned towards his own lodgings, where he soon found the rest which a few hours before he had wooed in vain.

## REVIEWS.

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THE SEVEN CURSES OF LONDON. By James Greenwood, the "Amateur Casual." London: Stanley Rivers and Co.

NOT many years ago there appeared in the columns of the *Pall Mall Gazette* a series of letters which bore the signature "An Amateur Casual," and which treated mainly of the habits and customs of the British mendicant. The reading and thinking world was taken completely by storm, and for a time nothing was talked of but the strange scenes of workhouse and mendicant life which appeared every evening. It was as though a new world had opened out before the eyes of men and women. Respectable people who passed the shivering beggar and listened to his whining entreaty every day of their lives, but interested themselves not a whit in his life and adventures—as why should respectable people, in all the odour of broadcloth and respectability, be expected so to do?—Paterfamilias and that Pharisee, the British mother, had their attention suddenly excited, and became aware of the fact that these people really *did* possess human aims and sympathies and eternal souls to be saved. Whether the interest thus excited had any lasting effect is difficult to determine; probably some topic of more enthralling interest—the "Seven Belgravian Mothers; or, the Rapacious Innkeeper"—shouldered the "Casual" out of the field; and, after all, it was no very dainty task to interest oneself in the misfortunes of the dirty, wretched *pariah*, whose home was the cruel, pitiless street, and his resting-place the casual ward. Whatever the effect, though, of one thing there can be no doubt, that the thanks of every right-feeling man and woman were due to Mr. Greenwood, the writer of these letters, and the author of the work now under our notice, for the brave and self-denying way in which he exposed himself to perils from infection, to loss of personal comfort, to association with the lowest dregs of humanity, that he might bring the outcast under the notice of the respectable.

It is not a pleasant task—it is ever a thankless one—to lay bare the hidden sores of society, to describe the thief, the drunkard, and the harlot in such strong colours that he who runs may read. Delicate ladies will lift their silken skirt, and shrink as they pass poor Doll Tearsheet, who never had the slightest chance to be a good, pure, honest woman. Men of strict integrity and upright lives are too apt to class all the *fauna* of the London streets as



bad altogether, and to give them up as a hopeless job. And therefore it is that, ever and anon, there is a real want felt for some such book as Mr. Greenwood's—a book without a particle of romance or fine writing—the plain, outspoken testimony of a large-hearted able man to the “curses” which society is either unwilling or afraid to look into. Its title, “The Seven Curses of London,” will explain the character of the work before us—curses which require the strength of Seven Champions of Christendom to trample under foot and slay. And let the reader feel assured that nothing is advanced in this volume which is not the result of actual observation and careful study. Having devoted his time to the probing of social diseases of divers kinds, the “Amateur Casual” is prepared to speak as one having authority, there is scarcely a slum throughout all the length and breadth of giant London which he does not seem to have visited and explored: equally at home in Tiger Bay and Baldwin's Gardens as in Bond Street; as much acquainted with the palatial Alhambra as with the unpretentious Raglan Music Hall; feeling as much interested in the gutter children and the city Arab as well-meaning folk do in the Mandingoe and the Sandwich Islander—at one time taking part in a Thieves' festival in Ratcliff Highway, at another standing supper to a company of “Curragh wrens” in their furze-bush hut. When there is added to all this experience the charm of an unaffected style, and the conviction of a thorough earnestness, it cannot but be hoped that the book will become popular. Space forbids us going deeply into the subject matter of this very interesting work, and to make large quotations from its pages would be unfair to the writer. Let us content ourselves with giving the merest outline of its plan, leaving it to the reader to be perhaps amused, more likely saddened, but certainly interested. “The Seven Curses” are comprised in a dark catalogue, the mere headings of which make one very sad, and almost hopeless. First come the “Neglected Children,” the waifs and strays that float upon the tide of London life, that are born of drunken parents, cradled in sin and want, educated in crime, and die in despair. Hard, indeed, must be the reader's heart if he feel not some pang of sorrow at the dark story of these gutter children, of which there are, in England and Wales alone, at this moment, 350,000! while, “within the limits of the vast and wealthy City of London there wander, destitute of proper guardianship, food, clothing, or employment, 100,000 boys and girls in fair training for the treadmill, the oakum shed, and finally for Portland and the convict's mark.” And, furthermore, within a stone's throw of the august chamber where 600 right honourable lords and gentlemen are legislating for their country's benefit, there surges a vast, unclean

whirlpool of want and vice and misery which it might be worth their while, now and then, to attend to. "Baby Farming," an awful pest which the cases of the hag Charlotte Winsor and the recent one at Brixton threw a light on, occupies one startling chapter, and the author is pardonably severe on the absurd delicacy which refuses to treat of great social grievances like this, or, having supped full of its horror, wishes to hear no more of it. In such cases one feels inclined to echo Lord Palmerston's answer to the provincial city which prayed that the angel of pestilence should be stayed by a day of national fasting and prayer. "I will fast with you, and pray with you," was the wise old man's reply; "but let us also drain, scrub, wash, and be clean."

From the neglected child to the professional thief—the next curse—is a very easy transition indeed. If he is not starved or reclaimed, the gutter child developes into the pickpocket, and thence, by easy stages, into the man who gets his living as Rogue Riderhood says, "by the sweat of his brow," in his case meaning the being let loose like a wild beast to prey upon society. And in this chapter we are very glad to find that Mr. Greenwood holds up the thieves' literature, which is the shame and the curse of our time, to unsparing reprobation. It is almost impossible to over-rate the harm which these filthy publications do to the characters of their youthful readers; nor is it too much to say that half the juvenile thieves of London are moulded and encouraged by the halfpenny pamphlets, "Starlight Bess," "Blueskin," "Dick Turpin," and the like, the sale of which, in many instances, amounts to at least a *quarter of a million* weekly. The danger is not so much, as is popularly supposed, from their lawlessness and praise of crime as from their lewdness and immorality. It once occurred to the writer of these pages to read half-a-dozen numbers of this loathsome literature, and the thought was at once suggested, Why does the British public, in its spasmodic fits of virtue, which, as Macaulay says, recur at stated intervals, wink at the publication of these papers, while the obscenity of Holywell Street is pounced upon and punished? And there is this awful danger, too; the circulation of halfpenny records of crime is not exclusively confined to the criminal classes. No one can walk in the street without meeting some butcher-boy or shop apprentice gloating, open-mouthed, over the adventures of "Blue Skin" or the devilish portrait of "Starlight Sall." Nay, what is to prevent these books being introduced into families and poisoning the minds of respectable boys and girls? Under favour, most rigid censor of the Press, and you, right honourable lords and gentlemen, would it not be worth while to see to the burning of this wicked trash and the imprisonment of its writers and publishers?

Curse No. Three is that of the professional beggars. Their various dodges and makeshifts constitute one of the most interesting chapters in this book. In his happy description of the tramp and cadger, Mr. Greenwood rivals Charles Dickens' inimitable sketch in "The Uncommercial Traveller." Terrible as the course of professional mendicancy is it is well nigh hopeless to think of its extinction as long as so many foolish Samaritans are abroad who relieve without thought or question. The begging-letter impostor and the advertising beggar are very well described, some of their dodges being almost as incredible as the intense gullibility of their victims.

In Curse the Fourth our author feels that he is treading on delicate ground—for the subject of it is "Fallen Women"—but, while he acknowledges the difficulty in dealing with it, he shrinks not from his task. The thing exists; we cannot go out into the street or read the paper without meeting it, and it were absurd prudery indeed to turn our faces away and seem to ignore it. And surely, in these times, there is little or no need for apology when delicate-minded women make the cause of the "unfortunate" their own, and in their crusade against a certain Bill speak in public and in the very plainest terms upon a subject which they might well let alone. Mr. Greenwood assures us from statistics that there are, within the Metropolitan Police District, no less than 8600 fallen women, the districts of Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, and Lambeth furnishing nearly half of this shameful catalogue of sin. We would prefer leaving to the reader the dark contents of this chapter, and we would advise the silly young men who think the Argyll Rooms and Cremorne the *ultimatum* of enjoyment to compare the reality of stern fact with the unreality of gaslight and music and dancing; to follow the "gay" (ye Gods! what an awful mockery!) woman from the time that

"A poor handful of bright spring water  
Flung in the whirlpool's shrieking face,"

she commences her shameful path till the end comes, and the last of a series of pictures by one William Hogarth will show what that end is like. The greatest curse of all, though, remains behind; the curse that, like an awful nightmare, broods over London; the curse that causes all the others—Drunkenness. In this chapter our "Amateur" has really made a good point in one respect—he exposes the fallacy of many of the so-called "temperance" publications. Hard facts and statistics alone are useful in probing a social sore, yet it is in these that total abstinence tracts are lamentably deficient. They deal with harrowing stories of *delirium tremens*; they paint the drunkard's woes in most vivid colours,



but they refrain from showing what the increase or decrease of the vice may be in plain figures.

But we must stop here, leaving the sixth and seven curses—"Gambling" and "The Waste of Charity"—to the reader's own judgment. We have no hesitation in saying that, of its kind, the "Amateur Casual" is the best extant; the style is good and very free from exuberance; the stories are all well chosen. Plain-spoken the author certainly is, seeing that he is dealing, not with fine ladies and gentlemen, but unbridled ruffianism, and the reader who cannot digest plain speech must be content to seek for information elsewhere.

WITHIN AN ACE. By Mrs. C. A. Jenkin. London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1870.

MATRIMONIAL jars, like the sweet nonsense lovers talk, are, as a rule, only interesting to two persons, and a story which has for its subject the disagreements and misunderstandings between husband and wife, must possess some intrinsic charm of style and language to become interesting or even readable. And yet we think that the reader's impression, on arriving at the end of Mrs. Jenkin's single volume will be that he or she has been interested and amused. Partly, perhaps, because it is a single volume. Very many stories, of which the plot is simple, are just enduring when confined to a single volume, but, when dragged out into two or three, are wearisome and offensive. There is, for instance, that harrowing work of Mr. Trollope's "He knew he was Right," in which, for two mortal and lengthy volumes, the hero and heroine, who happen to be married, mistrust each other, quarrel, separate, become reconciled, separate again, the husband labouring under the impression that he is enacting the part of a family Brutus, and the wife very pardonably presuming that his conduct is "to madness near akin," and refusing to put up with his jealousy and absurd mistrust. Given a book like this, and a wet Sunday afternoon in a back street to read it in, and madness must ensue. If the worthy couple had brought their difficulties to a close in one volume by the judicious aid of Lord Penzance, much labour might have been saved on the part of the author, much weariness on that of the reader.

Mrs. Jenkin has been wise enough to bring her people together at the end of the book, and it is to be presumed that they lived happily ever after. Independently, too, of the interest felt in the plot, the reader is kept in a pleasurable state of excitement in trying to find out what the title has to do with the story. At one time the mind is fully made up to the fact that husband and wife

are "within an ace" of appearing in the Divorce Court; but next moment the triumphant conclusion is rendered of no effect by a hint thrown out that the wife was "within an ace" of refusing the husband the boon of her hand. To aspirants for literary fame who are incapable of constructing a plot, of drawing character, or even writing a page of correct English (though, of course, this does not apply to modern novelists), we would recommend a mysterious title—some such one, for instance, as "Not Time's Fool," which puzzled everybody some little time ago, till an ingenious unriddler of riddles discovered that it must be the antithesis to "Orval; or, the Fool of Time." The plot of "Within an Ace" is very simple, and not remarkable for its originality. There is the usual family of unmarried girls, and the usual orphan possessed of brilliant musical talent and a splendid voice, but labouring under the morbid idea that she is not wanted, and that everybody's hand is against her. The usual mysterious stranger arrives on the scene, and of course the orphan is the person upon whom he fixes his affection. They are married, and, after the first blush of the thing has faded, begin to find they are totally unsuited to each other. Cattie, the heroine, is proud, high spirited, and brooks not interference with her somewhat eccentric tastes. De Jençay, the husband, though loving his wife with a strong, deep love, does not allow his love to overpower his pride, and the consequence is that neither of them are in heavy training for the Flitch of Dunmow. After a good deal of mutual recrimination, the lady's temper not being improved by the fancied discovery that De Jençay married her out of pity for her lonely estate, things are approaching a crisis, and a separation seems more than probable, when a *Deus ex machinâ* in the shape of a very gentlemanly and loveable old French duke steps in and, by a little sensible advice, effects a reconciliation. To our thinking the old Duc is the best character in the book. His gallant and fatherly bearing towards Cattie; the charming air of *tendresse* which he throws into his tone, and, above all, the consummate tact with which he manages his difficult task, are all very well rendered. He reminds one instantly of the dukes in the time before the storm came upon France; the De Rohans and the like, who were not, perhaps, very thoughtful or very wise, yet were gentlemen *au bout des ongles*, tender to women, and ever careful of their honour; men whose chief fault was that they either ignored altogether the existence of the common people, or treated them with superb contempt. The companion portrait to the Duc is De Jençay's mother, quite a little cabinet picture in her way, and a type of the perfect French gentlewoman—little, white-handed, soft-eyed, dressed in faultless taste—who might have been known once as "La Belle Marquise," and played her part in the

Mask of Folly, which so suddenly ended in a Dance of Death. The caressing way in which she strives to put her son's young wife, who is defiantly conscious of lower extraction, at her ease, and the simple courtesy with which she makes way for the new mistress of the house, are very well described. But what, in the name of common reason, could have induced Mrs. Jenkin to draw such a character as that *enfant terrible*, Tottie, passes our comprehension. A child that passes disparaging remarks on our appearance to our face is a detestable creature enough, and makes us sometimes feel a thrill of sympathy with Herod; but a child like Tottie, who, on every possible occasion, asks a foolish conundrum and answers it herself—most of the riddles being of the prehistoric character, the spider taking a fly from the ark not being omitted—a child like this may have struck our authoress as eccentric and clever, but might strike others as not being in any way necessary to the action of the plot and ridiculous altogether. A great amount of research on the part of Mrs. Jenkin into Joe Miller's entertaining volume and the Complete Riddler, would seem to be implied by the character; though, had she been left out, the story would not have suffered. It is a curious fact that very clever writers fail with children: they either make them stupid little monsters of erudition or prodigies of virtue and piety. "*Contigit haud cuivis*," to draw a Tiny Tim or a Little Nell so natural, so loveable, that they live with us and in our hearts. Le Capitaine Shackoolan, by which curious title the duc, whose English is wonderful, designates Captain Jack Holland, a half-pay officer, of the bluff, hearty order, is a character cleverly sketched in a few broad strokes. His story of the High Church vicar is too long to quote here, but will make the reader laugh. On the whole, we can confidently recommend "Within an Ace." It is carefully written; the interest does not flag, and it is not immoral. In these days when it is a most important point as to whether the book sent home from Mudie's be fit to entrust into the hands of our daughters, it is very pleasant to meet with a story which relies for its success neither upon the erotic ravings of a silly, if not criminal girl, nor the wildly improbable feats of a Guardsman, very muscular, but utterly unchristian. "Within an Ace" is the simple history of life in a sleepy little French village. The curé, the maire, and the general society are described, if not with the masterly power of Miss Thackeray (who is peerless queen in this domain of fiction), at least pleasantly, forcibly, and grammatically. The incidents are not those of a wild nightmare, nor of an impossible state of society, but belong to ordinary everyday life, in which husbands and wives have little differences sometimes, and fall out, and make it up again, with tears and kisses, as they will do till the end of time.



## THE PEERAGE AND THE UPPER TEN THOUSAND.

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BETWEEN thirty and forty years have passed away since Lord Grey told the Bishops to "set their houses in order." But the words which the then Premier addressed to the Episcopal Bench might just as well have been extended in their sphere of application, so as to include the temporal as well as the spiritual peers. The Reform Bill of 1832, and the results which have followed in its wake, have had a powerful and even astonishing effect on the nation at large; and the rapid steps of the great engine of the State since that time in the direction of democracy have proved to the whole of the Upper Ten Thousand a call to look well to their doings, and to "set their houses in order" too. It must be owned that on the whole their lordships have had the good sense to obey this call, and that they have "set their houses in order," as a rule, most admirably. And well it is that such should be the case.

Thanks to the spread of Sir W. Curtis' three R's, to the introduction of the Penny Post, and the establishment of the penny daily and weekly press, all of us, and especially those of us who belong in any way to the Upper Ten Thousand, are forced to live in public to an extent at which our fathers would have stared in astonishment. In the good old days of the Georges, men in general thought little and cared little for the world of politics; they knew that a sapient body of legislators, Peers and Commons, met regularly at Westminster, and voted the supplies necessary for carrying on the Government—or "the war;" but there were no "Punches," or "Parliamentary Companions," no "Shilling Peerage," and "Shilling House of Commons," to introduce those legislators individually to the multitude for whom they legislated; and as long as the machine of government went pretty smoothly on its course, it mattered but little to the jog-trot Englishman of those days of what materials it was composed.

But now the case is far different. *On a changé tout cela.* Thanks to Gilray and Cruikshank, and "H. B.," those among our fathers and forefathers who walked down Bond Street or St. James's Street, or sauntered along "the sweet shady side of Pall

Mall," grew familiar with the faces of Liverpool and Canning, Burdett and Peel; but now the farmer of the Land's End, the fisherman of Johnny Groat's House, the fowler of the Norfolk "Broads," and the hat-crowned peasant-wife of St. David's, one and all can read the history of the age in which they live in the weekly cartoons of "Punch" and the other lesser comic and serious illustrated papers,—can grow familiar with the faces of Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Bright, and my Lord Granville, and my Lord Derby, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in a word, of any one who "comes to the fore" in either of the two Houses of Parliament.

And why should not this be so? We frankly own we can see no reason why. On the contrary, it strikes us as a good and useful and sensible arrangement for the great mass of the British public to take an intelligent interest in the lives, the characters, the past histories, the circumstances, yes, and even the very features of those by whom they are governed. The age of mystery in such matters is past and gone. We see the strings by which the political puppet is moved and swayed hither and thither. We see and are satisfied. We do not become rebels or revolutionists. On the contrary, we feel a keener and more personal interest in the "governing classes." The "Upper Ten Thousand" cease to be an abstraction in our eyes. They "live and move and have their being" before us. We are introduced to them, and they to us. And it is not only the vices\* but the virtues of those whom fortune has set in "high places," that are most conspicuous, and are most carefully noted by the public; and these men are well aware that they live in glass houses.

The eyes of the world, then—at all events of the world of Englishmen—is fixed on our "Upper Ten Thousand" as it has never been before; and therefore we venture to think that a few remarks on the subject of these "Ten Thousand" will not be out of place or devoid of interest at the present moment.

And first, then, let us look at our Peerage collectively, and at the families of which it is composed. If we remember right, Blackstone somewhere observes that it is most important that no one should be chosen into the great council of the nation except such as are eminent for superior knowledge, or bravery, or personal probity; and he defends the institution of a House of Peers on the ground that emulation or virtuous ambition is one of the best and soundest springs of action in a free state, as leading individuals to strive to make themselves subservient to the public good while aiming at their own advancement.

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\* *Omne animi vitium tanto conspectius in se  
Crimen habet quanto major qui peccat habetur.—Juvenal.*

Such then—at all events in theory—is the House of Peers, or rather such the aggregate of the English, Scottish, and Irish Peers. But how far does this large body, this miscellaneous aggregate, come up to the theoretic definition laid down so precisely and with such naïveté by Blackstone? We will not ask how far that theory is realized in the persons of such people as the late Marquis of Hertford, or the late Earl Fitz Hardinge, or—to go a little further back—by the late Duke of Queensberry, the “old Q.” of Piccadilly. But we will ask how far it is realized in the present House of Peers collectively? and on the whole we venture to think that so far as any mere human institution can do so, it will be found that that venerable body does come pretty nearly up to the high standard laid down by Sir William Blackstone.

In the point of wealth, it is notorious that the House of Peers can exhibit a standard which cannot be equalled in any other country under the sun, save by royalty, and possibly not always even by royalty itself. Take such a batch of Peers as the Dukes of Northumberland, Devonshire, Sutherland, and Buccleuch, the Marquises of Westminster and Bute, the Earls of Derby, Lonsdale, Dudley, and Leicester, and Lord Overstone. And where, upon the map of Europe, will you find their equals collectively, in the mere matter of wealth, as shown in their broad acres? Prince Esterhazz may rejoice in very splendid diamonds; but we will venture to say that Lord Dudley’s collieries will produce specimens of rude diamonds just as valuable—perhaps more so in the long run. Let the grand Duke of this or that talk, if he will, of his fief in Germany; but the Duke of Buccleuch can boast that he has so many country seats, that if he were compelled to reside a month in the year at each, and to spend a month in London besides, he would have to forfeit one of his estates on the ground of non-residence: the Earl of Breadalbane can boast with equal truth that he can drive for seventy miles in a straight line without going off his estates in Perthshire; the Duke of Sutherland can affirm, without any fear of being accused of exaggeration, that he owns nearly all the soil of at least one northern Scottish county, to say nothing of his estates in Staffordshire and Buckinghamshire; the Earl of Ellesmere and the Duke of Buckingham can point to the union in their persons of the vast properties of some two or three heiresses, which have raised them—either now or in past time—from ordinary to almost fabulous wealth; and what is more, in almost every case they can plead that their riches are well used, and made profitable and serviceable to the country at large.

And yet every medal has its reverse, and “all is not gold that



glitters ;” and Longfellow reminds us, in his “ Psalm of Life,” that—

“ Things are not what they seem.”

What is true of “ things,” is true also of men, and nowhere more true than in our Peerage. The proud Percies, Dukes of Northumberland, are not really Percies, but Smithsons ; the Wellesleys are not Wellesleys, or even Wesleys, but Colleys ; the Pagets have no real right to the name of Paget, but only of Baily ; Earl Nelson is not a Nelson, but a Bolton ; Lord Carington is no Carington or Carrington in reality, but only a plain Smith ; Lord Braybrooke may call himself a Neville, and Lord Abergevenny a Nevill, but they have in their veins not a drop of blood of the great house of the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland, and owners of the princely castle of Raby ; the Earl of Warwick holds Warwick Castle, but he can trace no connection with the “ king-maker,” who set King Henry VI. upon the throne of England ; the Earl of Leicester is no Plantagenet, or Dudley, or Sydney, or even a Coke in reality, but only a Roberts ; Lord de Ros is not a De Ros, or a De Roos—spell the name as you will—but a Fitzgerald—an Irishman, not an Englishman ; the late Lord Clyde was no Campbell, but only a McLiver. It is true that the representatives of the real old genuine stocks of Grosvenor, Shirley, Courtenay, Howard, Arundell, Talbot, Stanley, Hastings, St. Maur, and Berkeley, all sit in the Upper Chamber of our legislature ; but the great majority of its members have no male descent to show that will bear inspection, or that will carry them six generations back without risk of a flaw. Sir Bernard Burke, in his charming “ Vicissitudes of Families,” informs us that out of the twenty-five Barons who six centuries and a half ago were chosen to enforce the observance of Magna Charta, not one is at this day represented in the House of Peers by a genuine male descendant ; and Mr. E. P. Shirley, after ransacking all the forty-eight counties of England, can find little more than four hundred families, titled and untitled together—not ten in a county on the average—who can show an unbroken male descent, together with an uninterrupted inheritance of broad acres, from the dissolution of the Monasteries down to the present day. To these statements we may add the fact that the fathers of some twelve or twenty of the peers created during the present century were men who would find it difficult indeed to get their pedigrees attested as noble, in the sense of “ Armigeri,” even by the Heralds of the College of Arms. Lord St. Leonards is the son, the late Lord Tenterden was the grandson, of a barber ; Lord Belper is the son of a manufacturer, and in early life was a manufacturer

himself; the late Lord Broughton—better known by his old name of Sir John Hobhouse—was a partner in Whitbread's brewery; the late Lord Carington's father was a banker and money-lender; Lord Leven is, or was within the last few years, a London banker; so also was Lord Overstone, whose father began life as a humble Dissenting Minister in North Wales and Manchester; the late Lord Clyde's father was a journeyman cabinet-maker; the father of Lord Chancellor Eldon, and of Lord Stowell, was a coal agent at Newcastle; Lord Campbell's father, though a Campbell by descent, was so poor, that the future Chancellor, while reading for the Bar, had to support himself by his pen, writing musical and dramatic critiques for the *Morning Chronicle*; Lord Cranworth was the son of a plain country clergyman; so also was the first Lord Ellenborough; Lord Annaly's father kept a second-hand book-stall in Dublin, and did a little business also in another way, as a money-lender; while, worse than all, according to strict law, Lord Leconfield never had a father at all, being the illegitimate son of one of the Earls of Egremont, who bequeathed to him his magnificent estate of Petworth, and so qualified him for wearing a coronet.

By ancient custom, too, the Lord Chancellor of England, though he has almost always made his way upwards from the untitled classes, sits as Speaker in the House of Lords, and takes precedence even of the Dukes. "It is a proud thing," as George Canning well observed, "for the Commons of England to see one of their number, a private individual, elevated from obscurity solely by the force of talent and industry, taking precedence of the Howards, the Talbots, and the Percies—of the pride of Norman ancestry, equally with the splendour of royal descent." The Lord Chancellor, as a matter of fact, is almost always a man who has "risen from the ranks." Every lawyer knows, if every layman does not, that no one but a man early trained to exertion in the school of necessity is likely to persevere in the battle of life so as to rise to the hardship of the English Bar. It was thus that Lord Hardwicke, Lord Mansfield, Lord Brougham, Lord Lyndhurst, and Lord St. Leonards found their way to the woolsack in the Upper House; and in this way the ranks of the Peerage are being constantly recruited from the walks of middle, and even of humble life; and thus that the untitled classes are insensibly attached to the country and its constitution by the feeling that the doors of the House of Peers are open to each individual, and that through the legal pathway every Englishman can climb to the very highest position to which a subject can rise, with the single exception of the Archiepiscopal See of Canterbury.

But though the wealthiest of our landowners are the most fre-

quent objects of the favour of the Crown, yet the prerogative of the Sovereign in the creation of new peers has been exercised with no sparing hand in favour not only of the law but also of the army and navy, in neither of which is aristocratic birth a pre-requisite. The sailors who, with their fleets, held the seas as part and parcel of the British Empire, and tamed the pride of the great Napoleon—the generals who have led our armies to victory on the battle-fields of Europe, on the plains of Hindostan, or on the heights of Abyssinia—these are the men whose names have gone to swell the roll of our peerage; and we can point to the titles of Nelson, and Hood, and Bridport, and St. Vincent, and Hardinge, and Gough, and Keane, and Lyons, and Napier, in proof of the fact that naval and military merit, even in the middle classes, will force or find its way into the ranks of our hereditary senators. And such men as those whom we have mentioned not only add fresh dignity to the more antiquated glories of other coronets, but also act as encouragements to other members of the same professions to “go and do likewise.” When Nelson ran his ship between two lines of battle-ships at St. Vincent, and boarded them both at the same time, he cried out, “A Peerage, or Westminster Abbey!” and a like feeling operates in the army and the navy generally, affecting not only those who have such honours placed fairly within their grasp, but also all such as can hope that by their exertions hereafter they may be able to attain a like distinction.

We need not, then, stop here to remind our readers that the British Peerage—though, viewed as a whole, it cannot bear comparison in point of pedigree with that of France—stands on a safe and secure basis, which, apparently, no revolution is likely to overthrow. It is not a privileged caste, as was that of France a century ago, with all sorts of civil privileges and immunities from taxation accorded to its members, so as to create and foster a feeling of jealousy against it on the part of the unprivileged body of the people.\*

Into the Peerage of France, a century ago, it was next to impossible for merit, however great, to force or to find its way; and had our Churchill, our Wellesley, or our Nelson been born in France under the *ancien régime* of the Bourbons, they would have remained plain untitled persons to the very end of their days, while every son, and every grandson, and every great-grandson of some

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\* “As all of this rank possessed, under the old *régime*, odious privileges with respect to taxation; and as, according to Madame de Staël, they amounted to a hundred thousand (besides as many priests enjoying similar exemptions), the gross abuses in the grant of this franchise for the most corrupt considerations were among the most prominent causes of the French revolution. The Peers, however, were a very small body, and had no functions like those of England.”—*Quarterly Review*. Vol. XLII. p. 281.



paltry count, would bear a count's title, like the head of his family. Thank heaven it is not so with us. The French *noblesse* \* could not marry out of the narrow sphere of their own titled classes, while with us the present female wearers of the coronets of the three senior ducal houses were born in the untitled classes, a Lyons, a Sheridan, and a Greville, without even the handle of "Honourable" to their names. Every month adds to the list of peers and peers' sons who marry the daughters of untitled houses, or of clergymen and barristers and plain country gentlemen, who seek a wife among the daughters of the titled aristocracy. Meantime all the grandsons of every duke and marquis among us, save and except the eldest, and all the grand-daughters, pass back into their place among the untitled gentry, carrying into it the refinement of ancestral homes, and recruiting with blue blood those very ranks of which their own titled houses are so largely composed.

Thus, instead of having in our "Peerage" one privileged "caste" in open antagonism with the rest of the community, class is knit to class, and the fabric of society welded closely together. The county magistrate or deputy lieutenant who marries a duke's daughter, has a brother at the bar, or in the army or navy, or in some country parsonage; and his wife, in spite of her high pedigree and title, is brought into contact with educated persons of far lesser pretensions than herself and her family, but possibly more than her equals in talents and personal acquirements. And while this levelling process is going on in one house, the younger son of some distant cousin, among the far-off collateral branches, is winning his spurs in India or Africa, and looking forward to the day when he, too, shall become a field officer, and a G.C.B., or a baronet, and at length, after receiving the thanks of both Houses of Parliament, shall enter the ever-open doors of our House of Peers, and take his seat among our proud hereditary senators, like Lord Clyde, or Lord Napier of Magdala.

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\* We must be very careful in distinguishing the real *noblesse* of France from adventurers and pretenders. It was only the other day that a paragraph went the round of the papers, stating that a Frenchman calling himself "Le Duc de Roussillon" had his name removed from the list of honorary members of a West End Club, because his proposer and seconder found out too late that *no such title is known or recognized at the French Embassy.*"

## AN INVOCATION.

OH, do ye slumber still,  
 Nor heed my voice, my will,  
 Ye beautiful and winged powers,  
 That flitted once through Fancy's bowers,  
 And found in Nature's depths a voice  
 So thrilling to the listening heart,  
 Bidding it in a world rejoice,  
 That could such wild delight impart ?

Can ye so coldly sleep,  
 And leave me thus forlorn ?  
 Wake—if it be to weep.  
 The sorrows that are born  
 In your free flight,  
 Are sweeter and more bright  
 Than all the joys that earth or hope can number,  
 While thus ye slumber.

Oh, while ye yet unflagging soared,  
 What joys upon my spirit poured !  
 In every passion, fierce or glad  
 That stirs the heart of living man—  
 In every fancy, sweet or sad,  
 O'er which the mind's full music ran—  
 There lived a joy—a sense of power—  
 Half hidden in its own delight,  
 As is the sun at noontide's hour,  
 Even by the splendour of its might.

And now ye sleep ! Alas ! no more  
 Ye take o'er earth your brightening way,  
 Ye droop the wings I urge to soar,  
 While at my feet decay  
 Shapes and emotions bright before  
 That now are soulless clay.  
 Ye sleep ! and from my hand hath passed  
 The wand that once your slumbers stirred,

And vainly sighs and tears I waste,  
Ye yield nor sign nor word.  
How blessed or toil or sacrifice would be  
Which won again that wand, that mastery !  
For oh ! it is a living death  
To linger in this world of breath :  
The skeleton of spirits flown,  
How sadly, helplessly, alone  
Beside your now forsaken throne.  
For, oh ! ye were mine ears, mine eyes,  
The very spirit of my spirit  
Through whom the beautiful earth and skies  
In countless wealth I did inherit ;  
All other joy and life would be  
Upon your throne a mockery.  
Wealth, power, and beauty, all in vain,  
Might sue to fill that vacant spot.  
The echoes of your parted reign  
That sadly whisper “ it is not,—”  
Those cold gray shadows haunting yet  
Where thronged the beautiful and true,—  
Those echoes wailing to regret,—  
Those spectre shapes with tears still wet—  
Are sweeter, dearer too  
Than all the splendour and the pride  
Of the wide earth can give beside.

Still stir ye not ? then slumber on  
Untroubled by my farther plaining,  
The light and life of earth are gone,  
Yet is one hope remaining.  
Be His name blest who gave to man  
A living soul when time began,  
And stamped His Image there.  
In love and immortality  
The peace of death shall set ye free  
As lightnings in the summer air ;  
And at its second glorious birth,  
Its sins through Christ forgiven,  
The spirit deaf and blind on earth,  
Shall hear and see in heaven.



## BRITTANY.

## THE "TREGORRAIS" AND THE "FETE OF ST. LOUP."

YEAR by year the number of tourists at home and abroad increases. It really seems as if there were some truth in the theory which has been broached, that to travel is in man what the dog's gyrations are on the hearthrug before lying down, and the hens preferring the branch-like roost to the strawfilled nest are said to be ; viz., indications of the savage origin of the most civilized. Certainly, the more complex and artificial our social state and civilization have become, the more has the habit of taking tours and excursions grown upon us.

With the instinct of the primeval savage, then, strongly asserting itself in me last summer, I looked round for some as yet, by me, untrodden fields wherein to wander. Should it be an English watering place with its "common objects of the sea-shore?"—No ! The irruption of crowded excursion trains, and the terrors of purse-emptying landlords, waiters, chambermaids, drivers, gate-openers, German bands, and porters, were sufficient to settle that proposition summarily in the negative. "The Rhine?"—Everybody went there. It was a sort of suburb of London where there were certain things to be "done," stared at and admired, in the company of the very people we wanted to get away from. We might as well be at the Royal Academy, or that noble institution, the British Museum, where British families are supposed to educate themselves, and where for the most part they seem to prefer indulging in gloomy luncheons under the shadow of Grecian statues, or the depressing presence of Egyptian mummies. No, the Rhine would not do.

Well, where *should* we go ? and as we asked the question again it scarcely needed to scrape the civilized interrogator to be sure that there was the savage underneath, for the ominous growl in which the words came out was sufficient. Would the little work we had seen advertised under that very title—"Where shall we go?"—assist us in forming our plans ? A furtive look at it on Mr. Smith's ubiquitous book-stall was sufficient. What about France, Paris, Normandy ? Too civilized, too Anglicized. Why there was actually an International Marine Exhibition with a

monster aquarium, in Normandy. No, that would never do! We had undergone the two exhibitions in London in '51 and '62, and the Dublin one besides, and that was surely plenty for one life time. At last, a friend's account of a country where you might have fine coast, and fair inland scenery, capital fishing, magnificent churches, old-world-looking towns, and costumes of the period of the flood or thereabouts, decided us. We should go to Brittany. In the hope that a brief record of our experiences there may be of use hereafter in settling the same knotty question for others, here it is. I shall so far diverge from the usual customs of describers of tours and journeys as to make it my business to indicate not merely the most remarkable points of social life, scenery, and architecture, but also to give what I venture to think is with many tourists a slight consideration, viz., full information as to the expenses of such a tour as we took.

I have often myself been tempted by the glowing descriptions of the travelled Englishman to follow in his steps, but the total neglect on his part of information as to what it cost him was the sufficient deterrent. How could I tell but that he had travelled with letters of credit in his pocket which should open to him the coffers of half the banks in Europe? For all I knew, he might have been a lawyer in large practice, who had only to say "Yes," or "No," to some consulting client and to receive his honorarium of £50; a doctor who made his £30 or £40 a day; or a popular preacher who had received a testimonial from his admiring congregation, in the shape of a teapot full of sovereigns, and who, leaving the teapot and his wife at home, had gone abroad to spend the sovereigns. Whereas in my case I wanted the best value to be got for the modest sum which I could manage to spare from a fixed income, and no chance of windfalls.

The period of time at my disposal was short, under three weeks. Its very shortness, of course, was an implied compliment, evincing, in a way that might have been dispensed with, the estimate put upon the value of my services by my superiors. Unfortunately, it was still further curtailed by a most inopportune attack of illness, which kept us at English hotels and within the range of the British Bill some four days longer than we had intended.

However, on the 31st of August, 1868, we left Southampton by the steamer *Cæsarea* for St. Malo. After passing the Needles and getting well out to sea, the night air being cold and damp, we turned in, and at 4.30 the next morning awoke to find ourselves threading the tortuous channel between the many islands and rocks which stud the coast and bay by which you approach St. Malo. We were along-side the quay soon after five: time of

voyage from Southampton exactly fourteen hours : expense from London, first class, 33s. The South-Western Railway Company issue return tickets between St. Malo and London available for a month for 48s. ; but as we purposed returning through Normandy we did not avail ourselves of this reduction.

The quay runs parallel to the walls of the city, which are massive and perfect, with very fine gates and a broad promenade all the way round. From the deck of the steamer we could see the upper stories of the houses in the town, and the spire of the Cathedral, showing themselves over the walls. A merely formal examination of the luggage—let stern tourists pardon me, I was leading about a wife—at the Custom House was soon over, and entering the city through the “Gate of Dinan,” we were in three minutes at the Hôtel Franklin. Seven or eight men and women were seated on forms in the court-yard apparently engaged in boot-cleaning and gossip. A longer experience of the former process, which we found to mean cleansing the leather from mud and dust and eschewing any attempt at polish, made us wonder why they should have got up so early, and in such force, for so simple an operation. A pleasant, merry-looking *bonne* promised us coffee *tout de suite*, and, dispensing with that irritating piece-meal, napkin-whisking preparation which English waiters are so fond of, kept her promise within ten minutes of having made it. Capital *café au lait*, with a ring of that excellent bread which, light as it looks, and is, somehow tries one’s jaws a good deal when new, and butter. Charge, one franc each. It was now six o’clock and the first *table-d’hôte déjeuner* was not to be ready till ten. So, after assimilating to some extent the renovation of the outer man to that which the inner had experienced, we set forth, in the clear morning air and bright sun, to view the town and bay. Seaward the eye was carried over the blue calm expanse to the horizon. East and west the rocks and forts, Cape Frehel on one side, and the coast of Normandy on the other, rewarded us with a view scarcely to be equalled, for our compulsory early rising. A solitary sentinel, lounging in a *degagée* manner (the sight of which would have incapacitated an English adjutant for duty for a week at least), was the only living being we met in our round. Returning towards our hotel about nine, we came through the narrow and somewhat ankle-dislocating streets, calling in at the Cathedral by the way. It is not a very attractive building, being in several styles, and the transepts low. The sight of some 200 people, ladies, men and children, market-people with their baskets beside them, kneeling while mass is going on, is, however, a new sensation to those who only see their churches at home opened once a week. The *déjeuner* at ten o’clock was numerously



attended. A good-sized room with a table round three sides was pretty well full as soon as the clang of the bell in the court-yard had ceased its summons. There was soup to begin with, and then came a succession of dishes which fairly bewildered us, not less by their number than by their often curious appearance and inscrutable composition. Melon seemed, to our discomfiture at the outset, to be generally considered the correct thing after soup. Then came an excellent *omelette* and dishes whose names were as unpronounceable as their flavour was excellent. We spent the day in and about the city. A walk across the firm sands and along a stone causeway leading to the island of "Grand Bey" brought us to the tomb of the gifted author of "*Le Génie du Christianisme*." A room is still shown in the Hôtel de France as that in which he was born; but as he was really born in the Rue des Juifs, we did not feel disposed to invest our francs in listening to such an apocryphal story. The present Hôtel de France is, however, part of the old town house of the Chateaubriands, and the Chateaubriand no doubt spent some of his early years in it. The Chateau of Combourg, some twenty miles south of St. Malo, was then, as now, the country house of the family, and he dwells often in his memoirs on its associations and surrounding scenery. In 1828 he wrote to the Mayor of St. Malo as follows: "Long ago I determined to ask the city of my birth to give me on the western point of the Grand Bey, nearest the sea, a little corner of earth, sufficient to contain my remains. I will see that it is consecrated and surrounded by an iron railing. There, when it shall please God, I will lie under the protection of my fellow-citizens." His request was granted, and his remains lie in a simple tomb of granite, a massive stone of which, without inscription, surmounted by a low cross of the same material, is placed on the summit of a point whose base is washed now by summer ripples, now by the storms of winter.

The sea-bathing at St. Malo is very good, though we were told that at Dinard, on the other side of the river, to which steamers run constantly, it was even better. Men and women wear a costume which offers nearly as much scope for taste and coquetry (in the latter of course) as the ordinary dress of mortals. Certainly the women's dress is a vast improvement on the long, clammy garments in which our wives and sisters invest themselves at home. It is a sort of Bloomer costume, which allows full freedom to the limbs. It offers no hindrance to those who, not satisfied with the customary little dips by virtue of which the water actually reaches to the knees, and the still more customary accompanying little scream, desire to make some effort after swimming. The fashionable time for bathing is from three to five.

At five and seven in most of the hotels there is the *table-d'hôte* dinner.

The coast scenery between Dinard and Matignon *via* St. Enogat and St. Cast, and thence to Cape Fréhel, we were told was only surpassed by that near Perros-Guirec, but time would not allow of our exploring it. At four p.m. we left by the diligence for Dinan. There is a steamer which sails daily between St. Malo and Dinan up the Rance, a river which the guide-books compare to the Dart, but which, judging from the glimpses we got of it *en route* seemed rather to resemble the lower part of the Tamar from the Saltash Bridge up to Cothele. The steamer, however, we were told was not to sail that day, owing to some works going on at a lock near Dinan. It appeared afterwards that it really did go, though not all the way. As this would have involved a two mile walk from the landing-place into Dinan, we were (bear in mind the luggage, please) reconciled to the loss of the scenery.

After a dispute at the bureau of the diligence between some English people on their wedding-trip, and the clerk, as to places, in which the said clerk worked himself up into such a fury that he literally tore his hair and stamped on his hat in the course of his imperfectly-understood remarks to the lady, we started. It is only fair to say that this was the only instance in which we saw a Frenchman approach even the confines of rudeness to a lady. We found ourselves behind two as sorry-looking steeds as were ever girded with old and string-patched harness. We passed through St. Servan, a suburb of St. Malo and the abode of a colony of English, and on reaching the first descent, a look at the drag revealed the fact that an old boot had ingeniously and economically been made to do service as a drag. Altogether it seemed doubtful whether it would be possible for such a turn-out to accomplish the journey to Dinan under any, the happiest, combination of circumstances. The little horses, however, proved themselves better than they looked. The road was superb, as smooth as a garden path well rolled, and we *seemed* to get on swimmingly, but it was nearly nine o'clock before we reached Dinan. But the long journey was far from being tedious or uninteresting. Not that the country was particularly picturesque, but the views now and then caught of the Rance, the numberless wayside crosses, and the sight of the passing people—cassocked priests, white-robed nuns or sisters of charity—enlivened the way. Country people were driving home from market the very longest of long-legged pigs, their idiosyncrasy being doubtless due to the fact of their feeding on the longest of long-stalked cabbages, which grew in great abundance in the fields and gardens we passed. The driver wore the

usual blue blouse, which from its universality makes an imaginative Englishman think at first that he has come to a country inhabited mainly by butchers. The off-horse was decorated here, as elsewhere in our travels, with a leathern circular band hung with bells round the collar, which afforded us a musical accompaniment as we went along.

At Chateauneuf, about half-way, we changed horses under the inspection of a *gen-d'arme*. The wonderful uniform of this corps—cocked hat, blue cut-away lapelled coat, big sword, and yellow sword-belt worn sensibly over the shoulder, and not like that of our troops, round the waist—has been made familiar to us in the celebrated picture of “Marie Antoinette going to execution.” During the operation of changing horses we were opposite the café of the village, on the entrance of which, serving at once as door and window, was emblazoned in large letters the magniloquent notice, *Entrée du Café !*

Shortly before nine o'clock the driver told us that we were close to Dinan, and at the bottom of the hill should cross the viaduct over the Rance. It was nearly dark, but for the light of the rising moon, but we could see enough to make us determine to come back early next day and see it more perfectly. The viaduct is nearly 800 feet in length, and is 120 feet above the banks of the river. It rests on 10 arches, each of about 50 feet span. The carriage way is 15 feet wide, and on each side are footpaths of about a foot and a half. This magnificent work crossed, we had still a sufficiently steep ascent to climb, three-fourths of which was through a street villanously paved. This brought us to the heart of the town, quaint and picturesque with old houses projecting on wooden pillars with the footpath underneath, and only moderately well lighted. After crossing the Place Duguesclin, the first of those fine central spaces surrounded with lime trees, which we found in almost every town we visited, we passed through a massive deeply-recessed mediæval gateway at the other end of the town from that by which we had entered, and were set down at the Hôtel de Grande Bretagne. Another of those pretty tidy *bonnes* (Marie was her name) who seem indigenous to Brittany greeted us as if we had been old friends. Could we have anything to eat? “*Mais oui, tout de suite !*” Our faith in waiters' promises, so rudely tried of late years in England, began to revive when within a quarter of an hour we sat down to our late dinner in the salon.

Again we got excellent soup, and after sundry dishes of inscrutable but vivifying composition, and a bottle of Ind & Coope, we adjourned to a table outside for a cup of coffee and a cigarette (for one of us). Our bedroom was clean and comfortable, the little French beds having long curtains edged here as throughout



Brittany with beautifully fine lace. The only fault we could possibly find was the scarcity of water for purposes of ablution. The basins and jugs provided for such purposes seemed to be interchangeable with, and indistinguishable in point of size from, those in which our *café au lait* was brought to us in the morning. In all the hotels, however, there is placed in the entrance-hall a good-sized reservoir, generally of brightly polished copper, and always well supplied with water, and with a fixed basin underneath of the same material. The whole affair is something like a small street drinking-fountain in England. You turn the tap of the reservoir and fill the basin. The soap is on a little ledge close by, as also the towel. What more can you possibly want?

Early next morning we were awake by the noise of preparations making under our window for the departure of the diligences, the "bureau" being next door. The beauty of the morning, and the sight of the fine gateway immediately opposite, under which we had passed the night before, effectually reconciled us to exceptionally early rising. After a hand-basin of coffee and some bread and butter, we started on an exploring expedition through the town. It was market-day, so there were the usual terrors of strings of cattle rushing hither and thither at the instigation of drovers, to whom, if I had been competent to do it, I should like to have addressed a good translation of poor Tom Hood's reminder to the Smithfield drover, viz.—

"Bullocks don't wear oxide of iron!"

Escaping unharmed we found the statue of Bertrand Duguesclin guarding the place where 500 years ago he vanquished Thomas of Canterbury, and so raised the siege, the English army retiring from before the town.

Dinan possesses two magnificent churches, in one of which (St. Sauveur) Duguesclin is buried. The façade of this church is a mass of sculpture. Christ in the attitude of benediction, attended by angels offering incense, is the central figure. The interior is massive and impressive, though spoiled to the English eye by the separation of nave and choir aisles into so many side chapels, each with its altar and cheap lace covering, and a tawdry figure of the Virgin or picture of doubtful merit. There is, therefore, a loss of that general effect which carries the eye in an English church or cathedral to that which seems naturally intended to be the central point of attraction, viz., the choir and its altar.

Still, there are two sides to this as to every question, and it has often struck me that our cathedral services, except on Sundays and other festivals, if held in a side chapel would be better attended than they are now. The discouraging and chilling effect

of seeing ten or a dozen people scattered about an immense area calculated for thousands, may perhaps account for the general neglect of such services, however reverent and beautiful they may be in other respects.

The other church (St. Malo) is surrounded by trees and walks which extend to the walls of the town, from which you look down the precipitous bank to the river 100 feet below. It seemed to us a brighter and far more cheerful building than St. Sauveur.

The remembrance of our second visit to these walks late that evening, when the clear moonlight slept round the spire, and cast its deep shadows over the windows and battlements of the choir, is one which will take its place for life beside those of early days, and of a certain grand old church in Nottinghamshire. It was one of those scenes where the mind instinctively recognises the beauty of impressions without being able to say how much is due to art, and how much to nature.

Returning to our hotel for the ten o'clock *déjeuner*, we passed two, evidently English, artists seated at good points of view, and transferring to their portfolios views of the street architecture of Dinan. May we see these well hung in the next exhibition of the Royal Academy, or falling to our lot through the medium of the "Art Union!" Perhaps to some of our readers the *menu* of the meal to which our morning walk had fitted us to do full justice may serve to give a good notion of the style of living which prevails in Brittany. I promise not again to trespass on the indulgence of those ethereally-minded mortals to whom scenery and architecture are all in all, and who care not for such sublunary delusions as eating and drinking.

First came soup, clear, with an inordinate supply of rolls in it. Then, in rapid succession, bouilli (we never got tough beef in France), veal, I believe, though I would not pledge myself rashly to this statement, mutton cutlets with mushrooms, and then sardines (!), haricot mutton with beans, roast fowl, leg of mutton, melon, green figs, pears, plums, and grapes. The Englishman's heart may sink within him at the notion of there being no pudding or tart, but he may console himself with the reflection that I am here speaking of the ten o'clock *déjeuner* or breakfast. Generally he will, even at this meal, be gratified at finding on the table an excellent omelette. There did not happen to be one on this occasion. At the five or seven o'clock dinner he will invariably find some attempt made to meet his national taste in this respect. After the fruit came water, butter, and pickles!! biscuits, sponge cakes, and macaroni. The quantity of these delicacies consumed after the serious part of the meal was over would argue, very falsely, that the supply of catables enumerated above was in-

sufficient for an ordinary appetite. I should add that cider (*coupe-gorge*) was on the table for use at discretion. The whole charge for this meal was two francs, a bottle of light claret quite sufficient for one person for a day was one franc fifty centimes. Sometimes a bottle of Ind & Coope was a grateful change, though undoubtedly there is something in the air and style of living which makes the light claret far more suitable.

On the 2nd September after breakfast we started, hot as it was, for the Abbey and Castle of Lehon, situate in the valley of Rance, and about two miles from the town. The castle is built on the top of a conical mound or hill overlooking the river. I shall not weary the reader with any historical or architectural disquisition; (1.) because, since about the year 1400, no events of interest are coupled with its name, and any attempt on my part to excite enthusiasm as to what took place before that date would I fear be a failure; and (2) because little beyond the site of the castle remains. So that it becomes a case of "story, God bless you, I've got none to tell." The remains of two circular towers give good stand points for two slightly varying views of the charming valley beneath. It appears that the monks of the neighbouring abbey used the materials of the old castle for the embellishment and enlargement of their church and monastic buildings. The abbey itself is now in a state of ruin. It stands on low ground near the river. Close by, and if not built, yet largely repaired, out of the materials supplied by the ruined abbey, is the parish church of Lehon, very like an ordinary English country church. There are some fifteenth century carvings on the façade, depicting, among others, certain events in the life of St. Malo. Crossing the little bridge, we came upon the first of the many scenes of out-door washing of clothes, of which we afterwards saw so many in Brittany. I should think that "washing day" cannot be the terror in Breton social life, which we are sometimes led to believe it is in the case of the British householder. The women bring down their clothes to the river bank in a contrivance of wood, something like a child's box saddle. When the clothes are taken out to be washed this serves as a seat or kneeling stool. The clothes well rubbed with soap, are rinsed again and again in the river and then beaten on a stone with a flat wooden "spat," such as is used in England for making butter into shapes. After all the rough treatment they meet with in this process, the wear and tear is perhaps not more than results from our patent washing machines. Certainly no more scientific mode of washing could impart superior whiteness. We returned by the eastern bank of the river, which flows lazily and with small volume at the bottom of a deep gorge to Dinan, and entered the town by the narrow



Rue de Jerzual, which was until the building of the viaduct described above the only entrance to the town from the eastward. How any animal partaking of the characteristics of a horse ever got up this street passes one's comprehension. The nearest English parallel that I can think of, is the "Bottle Bank," at Gateshead, down and up which all the traffic from England to Scotland and *vice versa* must, though it seems impossible, have once passed. Nothing but an inspection of this narrow approach to the Tyne, coupled with the knowledge of the fact just mentioned, would enable one to understand how any horses with a diligence behind them ever succeeded in reaching Dinan by the Rue de Jerzual.

After many halts, ostensibly for the purpose of admiring the quaint old houses, and especially the heavy gateway, which further contracts the street about half way up, we reached the top of the hill and the main street of the town. Here we made an investment, which I recommend every tourist in Brittany to make even earlier, viz., six francs for the "Guide Joanne," which may be bought in London for six or seven shillings. It is a most complete account of the whole country, and indispensable to any stranger who wishes to gain a good idea of it.

The best English work on Brittany that we have seen is Mr. Jephson's Walking Tour; and the accompanying box of photographic views for the stereoscope will give the English reader the best possible argument for going to see the country for himself. It is, however, an expensive work—five guineas—with the photographs. A little book, price one shilling, published by Messrs. Bemrose, Mr. Harrison's "Two Months in Brittany with my Knapsack and Fly-rod," will be sufficient for the general run of intending tourists.

A walk later in the day to the beautiful cross of St. Esprit, about two miles out to the right of Lehon and just beyond a large lunatic asylum, and back by the broad boulevard which runs outside the town and under the frowning walls of the Castle, with its memories of the Duchess Anne, was as much as British human nature could accomplish in one day. We were reluctantly obliged to leave La Garaye, to which Mrs. Norton's poem has given new interest, the famous menhir of St. Sampson, and many other places of interest, to be as we hope the scenes of future explorations.

We were told that Dinan is a favourite resort of English people, many of whom permanently reside there. Of late years a rather failing attempt has been made to attract visitors to the town as a watering place, and the most marvellous stories were told us of the efficacy of its spa in the cure of at least half the ills that flesh is heir to. Perhaps when gout and spleen have asserted

their supremacy, we may return to try the Dinan waters. At present we must be content to note the fact, and boldly chronicle the pretensions of this nascent Breton Harrogate. On the whole the town, allowing for the difference of site, reminded us as much of Chester as any English town. Combine Chester and Barnard Castle mentally and you have Dinan, minus only the costume and the language.

Early next day, having secured places over night, we started in the diligence for Caulnes, the station nearest Dinan, on the Great Western Railway of France. A comely, middle-aged, but rather saturnine sister of charity, all in white, was our only companion for the first half of the journey. The *bonhomme* of the driver, who had seen the world as a soldier in the American Civil War, lightened the monotony of travel. His imprecations on a *voleuse* of a peasant woman who had been discovered attempting to smuggle a basket of eggs through the *octroi*; and his philosophical explanation of his equally voluble abuse of a driver whom we met and nearly collided with (though the road was wide enough for three or four diligences abreast), to the effect that as the man had reason, which his horses had not, it was his place to "*arr-r-r-anger*" the animals and not theirs to get out of the way, were amusing enough. When we reached Caulnes, what with the heat and dust, and the addition of, among other passengers, two priests, one very stout, to our number, we were glad to exchange the hard seats and tinkling bells for the railway carriage and the steam whistle. We passed Lamballe, the church of which place is one of the finest of the second class of Breton churches, and reminds the traveller of the glimpse of Sherborne minster obtained from the South Western line. After a rather slow journey we reached St. Brieuc.

There was the usual delay about getting our luggage, but still the French system seems a better one than our own in this respect. You give your luggage in charge to a porter, who weighs it, tells the clerk what the weight is, and if it is within the amount allowed by the class you travel by, you pay two sous for registration and receive in return a paper ticket inscribed with the weight, number of packages and their destination. This, on reaching your journey's end, you present at the counter and your luggage is handed to you. There is none of that fearful scramble which is the terror of the unprotected female traveller, and, indeed, of all but the strongest and strongest-minded of both sexes in England. The railway tickets are numbered by the days of the year, *e.g.*, those for the 7th of September, 1868, were marked, 251.68.

St. Brieuc seemed a dull, though considerable town, having a population of upwards of 15,000. Its apparent dulness and want

of interest, as compared with other towns that we visited, arises probably from the fact that of late years it has been very much modernised. It is too regular and well built, the streets are too wide, the stone too freshly blue—not to be disappointing in a measure to the tourist in search of the picturesque. After dining at the *table-d'hôte* of the Hôtel de France, we visited the cathedral, which seems to have been undergoing a series of additions and patchings from the thirteenth down to the present century. No wonder, however, that it should look a battered and worse than weather-worn building, for it has been twice the fortress within which the townsmen have sustained sieges, the great tower at the western end having been constituted the keep of the fortress. The choir and its triforium are very perfect and beautiful specimens of fourteenth century work. There are still some fine old houses left standing here and there, but for street architecture St. Briec is not to be compared with Dinan.

We had been recommended to pay a visit to Portrieux, a small village on the western shore of the bay of St. Briec, the inducement held out to us being, a comfortable quiet hotel and magnificent sea-bathing. No public conveyance would, we found, take us there till next day, and the *triste* air of Saint Briec did not tempt us to even that delay. We therefore chartered a carriage, which took us there for five francs each, the distance being fourteen or fifteen miles. It got dark soon after we started, but what we saw of the country on this our entrance into the Trégorrais was sufficient to shew that it was much more diversified with hills and valleys than the country we had passed through eastward of St. Briec.

The carriage would have held eight or nine comfortably, and our two horses, though seeming, and only seeming, to travel rapidly, took three hours to do the journey. The driver was, during a good deal of the latter half of the journey, asleep. More than once we had to wake him up, but the horses happily seemed quite able to do their work without his guidance. The mysterious appearance of a rough-looking man and boy, who at one point of our journey got into the carriage, combined with the surliness of the driver himself, might have suggested thoughts of brigandage on that lonely road; but by nine o'clock we drew up in safety at the hotel at Portrieux, kept by Madame Léloug. After the inevitable *café au lait*, the only thing obtainable, we strolled out in the moonlight on to the little pier, and then through the town. There is, we were told, quite a considerable commercial intercourse between Portrieux and Jersey by means of two or three cutters, which have sailed for years to and fro with cattle and farm produce. The exports from this little port in 1865 amounted



to fifteen millions of francs. Since our return from Brittany we saw with regret that one of these cutters was lost near Cape Fréhel.

The little harbour is yearly enlivened by the festivities accompanying the departure of the fishing fleet of the Bay of St. Brieuc, for Newfoundland. On a certain Sunday in May, at the highest spring tide, the fleet, manned by three or four thousand sailors, is ready to sail. At a given signal, the anchors are weighed simultaneously, and amidst the firing of small cannons and musketry, the sailors, with uncovered heads, sing the hymn "Ave Maris Stella," and then set forth on their long voyage.

At the time of our visit no such excitement prevailed. The streets of the little town were quite deserted, every one seemed to have gone to bed, though it was only ten o'clock. Nothing, perhaps, strikes one more in this primitive country than the early hours kept. The inhabitants, in all but the large towns, are up by cock crow, and in bed soon after, if not before, dark. Whether it were owing to the deadly-lively look of the place, or to the very primitive nature of the hotel arrangements, we decided on the spot that our friend had in the matter of his recommendation to us, been like Hope in one respect, viz., that he had told too flattering a tale. We breakfasted next morning in the kitchen, which we shared with some drovers and their dogs, all waited on by a fine strapping girl with as fine a head and features as ever served as a model for a Madonna. Our first question was "Can we get away from this?" Even our early dip in the clear water of the bay could not reconcile us to a longer stay, and learning that a diligence passed through the town for Tréguier about ten o'clock, we determined once more to test the value of our friend's recommendations by visiting that out-of-the-way city. A long drive through latterly a well-wooded and undulating country, with some fine coast scenery in which the seven isles of Bréhat stood out in the clear atmosphere so sharply defined that their shadows were reflected unbroken by a ripple in the calm blue of the sea, brought us to Paimpol. We missed seeing the circular temple at Lanleff, but the passing glimpse of the ruins of the Abbey of Beauport made up for our loss. Just opposite the entrance to the parish church of Beauport was the Holy Well, surmounted by a cross and shrine, with several brightly dressed figures under the arch, in attitudes of devotion.

At Paimpol we found a good *déjeuner* ready for our refreshment, and half an hour afterwards we took our places in the diligence for Tréguier, carrying his Imperial Majesty's mails. Half way between Paimpol and Tréguier we crossed the fine suspension bridge across the Tricux, which here forms a wide estuary. The

guide-books said there was a town (Lezardrieux) close by, but I am bound to say that the *joli bourg* described therein did not present itself to our gaze. The great similarity of the names, as well as the scenery itself, to those of Cornwall and Devon was here very marked. Just as there is a Lizard point in Cornwall, so here we have the word Lezard. Just as in the extreme west of Cornwall there is St. Paul (by Penzance), so here is St. Pol de Léon. The Lizard or Lezard has been sometimes (as, *e.g.*, by Jephson, I think) supposed to be connected with lazar, and a theory built thereon that in both was a hospital for lazars or lepers, but I believe the word really means a gate or entrance, and the application in both cases is obvious. The bridge of Lezardrieux, built in 1840, is very similar to the Menai suspension bridge, though not so wide or massive a structure. It is upwards of 700 feet in length, the supporting cables being suspended from four granite pyramids. A small toll is paid by each foot passenger or carriage, and a notice warns the latter that no quicker motion than walking is allowed. As it was, we felt the narrow roadway swaying a little as we passed over it. Ships of 200 tons burden can pass under it when under full sail and at high water. It is quite 100 feet above the river.

Soon the sight of the high chimney of the first manufactory we had noticed in Brittany warned us of our approach to Tréguier, and then the open work of the cathedral spire came in view. At the entrance of the town our driver left us, with many expressions of gratitude for a half franc *pour boire*, and was replaced by another, who drove us as far as the diligence office. Why the man who had had the trouble of driving all the journey through should not have had the honour and glory of shouting and whip-cracking through the streets of the town was to us a mystery. Possibly he was not of an enthusiastic temperament, and as his dinner may have been waiting at his cottage at the entrance of the town he was glad to humour a friend by allowing him to create the, I should think, solitary daily sensation of this remote and sleepy city.

It was during our journey from Portrieux to Paimpol that we met with an amusing acquaintance—a *commis-voyageur* or commercial traveller in the coffee line. He was very anxious to be enlightened as to the manners and customs of the English, and had a special ambition to air his acquirements in our language before our fellow-travellers. We soon became great friends, and, staying at the same hotel at Treguier, and afterwards at Guingamp, he was evidently determined to make the best of his opportunities. That night after dinner at Tréguier (he having followed us from Paimpol later in the day), he pursued his investigations with the aid of a French

and English phrase-book. His special curiosity had respect to pudding and buttered toast. When did we eat pudding? by which to us generic term, be it understood, he meant simply and solely "plum pudding." "That was the invariable circumstance of an English dinner, was it not?" and "at what stage of that meal did the buttered toast come on for consumption?"

I fear that our protestations against this arbitrary limiting of the English cooking faculty was viewed to the last with distrust, and looked on as a sort of polite deference to the superior genius of French gastronomy. At intervals, when the conversation flagged, he would, as if the idea had struck him afresh, turn with an expression betokening excessive mental excitement, and set us off into an inevitably risible mood with the words, "The French are very courageous." "Oh yes," was our oft-repeated patriotic rejoinder, "and the English too." It was impossible to damp an ardour which every now and then culminated in such a statement, it was almost impossible to make it clear to him that our amusement did not originate in any doubt as to the facts of the case so succinctly stated, but in his way of putting them. We resumed our tuition of this inquiring spirit next day, and continued it till we parted at Guingamp on the following Monday, his route and ours leading in opposite directions. We are to meet again, he promised us, in London, this year. By that time, whatever modifications may have occurred to him with respect to pudding and buttered toast, his *pièce de résistance* will, I am sure, be still as prominent as ever. I promise myself and him that, should we meet in the Strand, or Regent Street, at the very busiest period of the day, I will greet him with an unreserved acceptance of his favourite dogma, that "the French are very courageous."

Tréguier is the capital, though not the largest town, of the peninsula of the Trégorrais, the most beautiful and fertile tract of country which we saw in all Brittany. Like so many English cathedral cities, whilst rather dull it is eminently respectable. The centre of attraction for the tourist is of course the cathedral, the see being now united with that of St. Brieuc. This beautiful building takes up the whole of one side of the Place, which lies on the gentle slope of a hill. The whole length of the church, upwards of 220 feet, is thus offered to the view. The graceful, almost airy lines of the choir, with its double series of flying buttresses, the deeply receding porch of the south transept, with the great flamboyant window above it, carrying the eye on and up to the lofty, open-worked spire, the height of which from ground to pinnacle must be quite 190 feet, leave a satisfied impression of beauty and magnificence on the mind of the beholder. Even the half-dozen ruinous-looking sheds and shops which cling to the great



pile, like barnacles to a rock, do not seem out of place, though at first sight one might wish them away. On entering by the south porch, the great height of the vaulted roof, softened and deepened with blue ground and gold stars, had a striking effect. The choir, arranged just like that of an English cathedral, has forty-six carved oak stalls of sixteenth century work. The first of these to the right on entering has the legend of St. Tugdual binding with his stole the dragon which in some doubtless prehistoric times ravaged the surrounding country; that on the left shows St. Ives, the patron saint of lawyers, preparing to cross a stream which an angel divides for his accommodation.

Lest the visitor should be overwhelmed with the atmosphere of antiquity which surrounds these memorials of valour and sanctity, there was placed in the very centre of the choir at the foot of the great lectern a sign of modern improvement and convenience, in the shape of a wooden spittoon duly filled with sawdust. We are sometimes bidden to contrast the supposed slovenliness and irreverence of the English, with the reverence and care of the Roman clergy, but in this as in many other matters the real and the ideal are scarcely consistent with each other. The sight of a great hulking priest turning at the moment of the elevation of the host and emulating, if not surpassing a Yankee in his copious expectorations, and on a marble floor too, and the suggestive arrangements we saw in Tréguier cathedral would probably incline us to think that after all they do not manage everything better in France.

Whilst we were examining the church, a poor old and blind man came in, and feeling his way across, bowed as he came in front of the high altar, and passed on to kneel in one of the side chapels. Doubtless those sightless eyes saw God where we too exclusively were thinking of man and man's work. The great organ stands in a gallery at the west end, so that here again we see a resemblance between what was until lately the almost universal arrangement in England, and what is still very common in France.

The cloisters, dating from the fifteenth century, are evidently little cared for. They form a square, three sides having fourteen arches each; the fourth, formed by the wall of the cathedral itself. On one of the doors we saw a printed programme of the observances which had been carried out on the occasion of the funeral of the last Bishop of Treguier, Mgr. Muntier, on the preceding 8th July. There had been first a grand procession, and in the evening a grander illumination of fireworks in the Place in the presence, and therefore under the immediate patronage, of the Archbishop of Rennes and the Bishops of his province. Fancy Archbishop Tait and Bishops Claughton, Bickersteth, and Baring patronising a grand illumination of fireworks in the square of an English

cathedral close, on the occasion of the funeral of the deceased Bishop of the see!

We paid a visit to the neighbouring church of Minihi-Tréguier—some two miles from the city—famous as the birth-place and last resting-place of St. Yvo, or Ives, celebrated in a hymn composed in his honour as “A Lawyer, and yet no Robber: a thing to be wondered at by all men.” The church itself is mainly of the fifteenth century. On the south wall hangs a copy of the will of St. Ives, which was, however, too high for us to read with any comfort or certainty. The breviary of the saint is preserved in a box at the parsonage close by. I asked the curé to let me see it, and found it to be a small volume in very thin vellum, the illumination very rich and quite legible, though dating from about the year 1300. The curé seemed surprised to find an Englishman and a heretic showing any curiosity as to such a relic of Catholic sanctity, and not less so at my reading passages in it from the Book of Revelation. I suspect his acquirements in the Latin language were limited to the recitation of the daily “office.” Whilst we were in the church, several of the villagers came in and knelt in prayer before the different “stations.” One poor man, accompanied by two children, was especially noticed by us. He came in and knelt down with a child on each side before the high altar. We left them there, and on our return from the parsonage, as we were sitting on the low wall surrounding the cemetery, they came out of the west door and walked down to a grave which had evidently not been long occupied. There they again knelt down. No doubt a wife and a mother lay there, and this may have been the first anniversary of her burial. Three weeks afterwards I was, during a walking excursion, examining an old Kentish church and graveyard, and got into conversation with a man in a similar rank of life, who, with his two daughters and a son, had come some miles to see the grave of his wife and their mother. He took them to the place, and saying, “That’s your mother’s grave,” turned away. Who shall venture to blame the Frenchman or the Englishman—though each had so different a way of shewing the same heart-feelings?

We found the Hôtel de France at Tréguier clean and comfortable, and the living good. Our disappointment at Portrieux was fully atoned for by the interest and novelty of our experiences at Tréguier.

The drive, by diligence, from Tréguier to Guingamp—some twenty miles—lay through a finely-wooded and hilly country. Again we seemed to go at a terrific pace down the hills and along the levels: but the time consumed by our driver at the wayside

inns, where, even at so early an hour as seven and eight o'clock, a.m., *coup gorge* and *chopins* of *eau de vie* were swallowed to the "n'th" with a running accompaniment of the gossip of the neighbourhood, lengthened out the journey to nearly four hours and a half. The largest town we passed was La Roche Derrien, standing high above the river Jaudy. Here we were joined by several peasants, in holiday costume, bound for the great *fête* of St. Loup at Guingamp the next day. We could not hold much communication with them, for they conversed mainly in Breton, which seemed to be about as different from French as the broadest Yorkshire or Northumbrian dialect is from English. We made several ineffectual attempts to establish a mutual understanding, and the more so as our "commercial" friend had left us at Roche Derrien, and we were deprived for a time of his amusing *mélange* of English and French. It was useless, however, to try. We had to give it up, and confine ourselves to such crumbs of information as the driver could spare for us from his voluble utterances to his compatriots. We learnt that La Roche Derrien is a capital place for salmon or trout fishing; and the sight of a broad, rapid, and rocky river on the right as we descended the hill from the town, was sufficient proof of his assertion.

Had I been alone, and under more auspicious circumstances, I should certainly have been tempted to take up my abode here for a few days. Let no misanthropic or misogyniacal bachelor look upon the latter phrase as an admission on my part of the superior advantages of celibacy. No. A wife is not exactly the best companion on a fishing excursion in a foreign country; but still that was a difficulty—(don't laugh, sir)—that might have been arranged. The real difficulty arising, certainly, out of the first was this, namely, that having brought rod and lines I had left my fly-book at home. Just before starting I had transferred, as I thought, all impedimenta from one portmanteau to another of more convenient size and form; and it was not until our arrival at St. Brieuc that I discovered that my well-stocked fly-book had been left behind, snugly esconced in the pocket of the discarded portmanteau. What was to be done? The wife, as I said, might have been "arranged," but the want of the fly-book was, I feared, and it proved to be, irreparable. I searched all the shops at St. Brieuc, but could only get some casting-lines, which might have been manufactured before the Flood, and which, having been exposed in the windows to the summer sun of centuries, had become so brittle that a minnow might have snapped them easily. And, as to the flies!—better say nothing about them. I have fished in Nova Scotia lakes, where the fish



are, or were, so unsophisticated that they would scarcely refuse to take a bit of red cloth and a boat-hook; but the artificial fly of Brittany beat anything I ever saw. With shame I confess it, I could not tie my own flies, so I was fain to cast doubts on the existence of fish in the rivers, or to put leading questions as to the amount of poaching prevalent.

The only practical use of my rod, therefore, on this tour, was to evoke a spirit of doubt and mistrust. On one occasion, indeed, it was nearly having a more inconvenient result. It seemed likely to open to me, a free-born Briton, the recesses of a French dungeon. Ignorant as I was of the laws of sport in France, I was accosted by a fierce gend'arme outside St. Brieuc with the intimation that it was *defendu* to do something or other, which, judging from his excitedly pointing at my rod, duly swathed in its cover, I judged to be carrying a rod without the Emperor's permission. Further conference and explanation elicited the fact that he had mistaken my rod for a gun; and a peace-offering from my sherry-flask completed the disillusion which ocular demonstration had begun.

The whole affair, however, from the unlucky forgetting of the fly-book down to the tantalising view of the broad deep pools and rocky rapids of the Jaudy, was sufficiently provoking. Moral for the bachelor cynic. Where should I have been if, having forgotten my fly-book, I had omitted to bring my wife? Is there not a silver lining to every cloud?

We reached Guingamp (Hôtel de France) in time for the mid-day *déjeuner*. The town was all alive, it being not only market-day, but the day before the *fête*. Guingamp has two annual *fêtes*—one in July, the Pardon, and this in September, the Fête of St. Loup.

Strolling out into the town, about one o'clock, we found great preparations going on in the Place, crowded with stalls and country people with their baskets of farm produce. The blue, serge-like dresses, and high, stiff white caps, bordered with broad lace, of the women, and the short coats and round ribbon-bedecked hats of the men, gave to the busy crowd an animated and interesting air. From the belt of trees which just inside a low wall surrounded the Place, were being hung in festoons little glass lamps of different colours, and filled with oil or tallow. An inner circle of poles, painted like those which mark our English barbers' shops, not yet quite improved off the face of the earth by the beard-movement, supported a second line of lamps, whilst at the lower end of the irregular, almost sugar-loafed space, was in course of erection a platform adorned with evergreens and flowers for the band, which was to arrive from Rennes that evening.

At the upper (south-east) corner of the Place, and outside the stone wall, stands the great renaissance fountain—one of the lions of Guingamp. Originally a leaden erection, it was restored in its present form in 1743, the sculpture being the work of the famous artist Corlay. The Virgin, with outstretched arms, surmounts it, and the water issues from the mouths of angels and dolphins, and, with questionable taste, from the breasts of sirens, whose hands seem to expel the stream by pressure.

Close by the fountain is the church of Nôtre Dame de bon Secours, flanked by a very curious old mansion, with the projecting circular tower which is familiar to us in Scottish architecture. In the evening, and up to ten o'clock, crowds of worshippers filled the little chapel, which forms the north-western entrance to the church. Some seemed lost in devotion, others on their knees made the circuit of the different stations. Many, if not all, offered their lighted candles, and the scene as viewed from the outside through the open iron work of the gateway, brilliant as it was with light, and diversified by the costumes of men, women, and children, with the figures of the twelve Apostles appearing each from his niche to survey the whole, was a very striking one. The next day being Sunday, and the anniversary of the crowning of the famous statue of Notre Dame de bon Secours à Guingamp by the present Pope, we went to the church during High Mass. The service was of course in Latin, but it was comparatively easy to follow it in its main features. The Gloria in Excelsis, instead of concluding the service as in the Church of England, came, as in Edward the Sixth's first prayer book, almost at the beginning. The epistle and gospel were those which the next Sunday we heard read in our own country church in England. After the creed, a portly old priest went up to the pulpit in the nave, opposite to which hung a large crucifix, and after giving in French an exhortation very like the bidding prayer used in English cathedrals, read the epistle in French to the people. Then followed a long list of masses to be offered during the week, and an enumeration of the many indulgences to be obtained by attending these and the festival generally. We learned that, heretics though we were, we were still entitled to three hundred days' indulgence in virtue of our presence on the occasion, provided only we were reverent and decent. I trust we put no bar to the unexpected and charitable benefit, for surely nothing can be in worse taste—to take low ground—than to outrage other people's feelings by irreverence or a careless bearing during their religious worship, whatever we may think of the errors or imperfections of that worship.

At two o'clock the place presented an animated appearance. The preparations were nearly completed, and the whole population

of the town and surrounding country seemed to have turned out on that brightest of September days and in the finest of holiday attire. The female element of course came out the strongest in point of numbers and gay dress. For the benefit of curious English inquirers I may give, as well as my ignorance of the fashions will allow, an account of the dress of one very gorgeous lady. She was the wife of a *pharmacien* on the Place. Her dress was the whitest of white muslin, a black lace shawl, a most elaborate lace-bordered cap, as stiff and peaked in its two wings spreading behind and upwards as starch could make it, a blue silk apron, and primrose-coloured gloves. It was a dreadfully hot day, and the coolness and airiness of this and many a similar, though perhaps not so elaborate a costume were quite a relief to the eye.

Three rows of benches had been constructed just inside the low wall of the place, the two back rows being slightly raised one above the other. The Place itself had been well swept and watered, and was as smooth as many a ball-room floor. After waiting some time under the shade of the trees, the band, having made the outside circuit of the Place twice, entered it from the upper end near the fountain. It was headed by the binious or Breton bagpipes, playing a lively air which, *da capo ad infinitum*, we were told was the music of the famous Derober. The people followed two and two in a sort of promenade, varied at certain shrieks of the biniau by a solemn setting to partners. Then most of the people, following the band, marched out of the town to the little chapel of St. Loup, about a mile and a half off. It was, or we thought it, too hot for us to accompany them, so we were satisfied to see them depart, and to learn that after a short religious service at the chapel, dancing was again indulged in, in a field close by, till about five o'clock, when the cavalcade set out on its return to the town.

We saw them re-enter the Place, the band and bagpipes still playing with undiminished vigour. This time, however, there was a slight modification in the mode of entrance. Whilst the seniors, led by the Mayor dancing with the wife of the commanding officer of the troops, entered at the upper end of the Place, the children, also in pairs, entered at the lower, and the two streams crossed and recrossed each other, until by common consent an adjournment for dinner was decided upon.

Every hotel and restaurant in the town was full of guests. At our hotel two of the largest rooms were fitted up with tables, which being to a great extent extemporised out of planks and trestles literally groaned under the vast array of dishes, decanters, plates, and fruit. It was a case of "each for himself," for the



waiters, though most obliging and all but ubiquitous, were unequal to the exigencies of the occasion. We were the only English people there, in fact for a week and more we were known wherever we went as "les Anglais," and everybody seemed to vie in shewing civility to us in a way which I fear two French people similarly situated in England might have wished but would almost certainly have failed to experience.

At eight o'clock, it being now dark, but for the moonlight, we went to the Place, which was now illuminated by the festoons of lamps, and crowded with people. Hundreds more were looking on from the windows of the surrounding houses, from the elevation afforded by the low wall round the Place, and from the street itself, from which you had to descend by two or three steps into the extemporised ball-room. Dancing had already begun, quadrilles, polkas, and the "Derober" following each other in quick succession. All classes seemed to be represented in the throng, military gens d'arme and civilians, but we did not see any of the clergy after four o'clock in the day. Smoking was universal, and the neighbouring cafés supplied ices and coffee in the intervals of dancing. At eleven o'clock we left the dancers still hard at work, and the ball did not break up till twelve o'clock, when special trains carried away most of the visitors eastward and westward.

Two things especially struck us, (1) the perfectly free admixture of all classes in the festivities—a private soldier and his sweetheart and two peasants dancing in the same quadrille with persons, who if not of the rank of country gentry must have closely approached it, judging by their appearance. There was none of that aping of the dress and manners of the next superior grade in society which has of late years become so common in England. Each class seemed perfectly content, and even proud, to be, and to be known to be, what it really was. (2) There was no roughness, rudeness, or drunkenness, whilst there was much hilarity and unmistakable enjoyment.

The next evening the ball was resumed, and a grand illumination of fireworks added to the other attractions of the fête.

We returned to England *via* Rennes, Dol, Avranches, Granville, Caen, and Havre. This route is so much more frequented by English tourists, and has been so often described, that we leave it unnoticed.

Several works on Brittany have of late been published, which any one purposing to take a tour in the country may consult with advantage. Two have been mentioned above. Of more recent works, there is Mrs. Palliser's "Byeways of Brittany," well illustrated and full of legends. It is more of a guide book than Mr.

Jephson's book. Then there is Mr. Musgrave's "Ramble into Brittany" in two not very portable volumes, of which only the last half of the first and the first half of the second have to do with Brittany, the rest of the work describing Paris and the journey to and from Rennes. Perhaps the most interesting to the general reader will be Mr. De Quetteville's "Pardon of Guingamp." The intending traveller in Brittany cannot have a better companion.

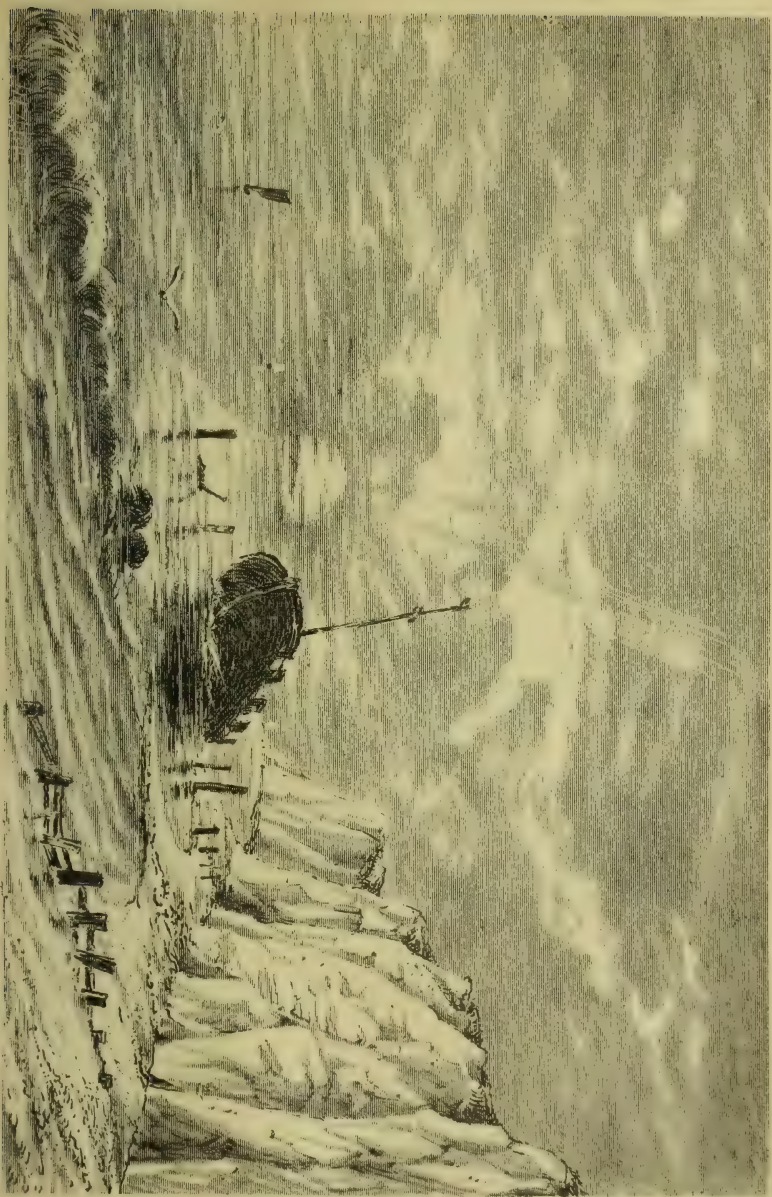
The whole expense of our nearly three weeks' tour from London to our extreme point in Brittany and back was less than thirty pounds. This for two persons, one of them a lady, will, I doubt not, be deemed very reasonable. Perhaps the fact of its being so inexpensive a tour will induce some of our readers to go and see for themselves a corner of Europe which has so much to interest. There certainly is not the grand scenery of Switzerland or the Pyrenees, but to any one who desires to see architecture of the best, and to study the manners and customs of a primitive people, we say "Go to Brittany."

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#### A SEA COAST AND A SHATTERED VESSEL.

SILENTLY, mournfully, to and fro,  
The long waves wash under thee ;  
Rocking thy broken and battered prow,  
Threatening to sunder thee.  
Helpless and hopeless—no one to care,  
Though a storm shatter thee ;  
Only the cold rocks, white and bare,  
And the pulsing sea, so false and fair,  
And the distant boats that have left thee—there,  
And the calm sky, watching and wondering where  
The winds may scatter thee.

"Silently, mournfully to and fro  
The loud waves wash and toss"







## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

## BOOK II.

## CHAPTER III.

CISSY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I HAVE some authority for believing that I was as bad a child as ever was born.

Nurse after nurse lectured me solemnly on my wickedness, and it was hinted in pretty plain language that I had come into the world only to be a plague to my parents. From my earliest years I was oppressed by a sense of gigantic wickedness. I was not aware that I had ever done anything particularly sinful, but I had a dim misgiving that I had been inoculated with wickedness—that it flowed in my blood, and that having once got into my veins, it could never be got out again. It seemed to be taken so much as a matter-of-course that I should always prefer evil to good, that I began to regard myself as a doomed being, an accursed thing, a moral deformity, a hopeless young reprobate, whose ways were beyond mending, let me, or let other people, try as much as they would. It seemed to me as if a stern necessity were behind my back, urging me on to some terrible final catastrophe that there was no avoiding. I began to grow reckless. I felt that to try to be good was merely to throw pains away. I believed that it was my destiny to be all that was shocking in the present and in the future—to howl, break plates, tear up copy-books, and be whipped.

I used, I remember, to be seized with sudden gusts of passion. At a word away would fly tumbler, salt-cellar, and plate, the contents being dashed to the ground. It was only when the mischief was done that I had time to reflect on my conduct. I always felt a species of amazement; it seemed to me that some demon must have been breaking the crockery; I could hardly believe that I myself had been the offender, so involuntary had been the act, so little had I been influenced by *malice prepense*. As the amazement passed away, I began to feel the deepest contrition, and before my sorrow had found vent in a dismal howl, the inevitable chastisement supervened.

I was dragged out of the room by one arm, thrust into a dreary little chamber, all cupboards and high walls, and the key being turned upon me, I was left, after a process which it is unnecessary to detail, to kick myself frantic and shriek myself hoarse, as it were, at the bottom of a pit.

I remember well that dimmallest of little rooms, in shape so like a sentry-box. Locked in there, and abandoned to remorse and evil forebodings of more punishment to come, how dreary and sick at heart I used to feel as the long summer evenings closed gradually in. My passion soon spent itself, and then I would listen to the birds singing outside the tall, narrow window, and I would envy them, thinking they were always happy and always good, and finding in their simple notes a pathos that I have never discovered in music since, and which made my heart yearn for I knew not what, and always moved me to tears. I used to listen to the carriages rolling along the street, and fancied the sun shining brightly, and the park full of gay people, and as I heard my mother passing up and down stairs, and the servants laughing in the kitchen, and the cheerful rattle of the cups and saucers being put out for tea, I would feel that I was indeed a little out-cast, forgotten by everyone, and miserable through my own fault—or, rather, through an evil destiny—when all the rest of the world was happy.

The servants used to tell me that if I did not reform my morals altogether, and become a good girl—I wonder, by-the-bye, what precise meaning they attached to the term—a “judgment” would overtake me. I was informed that in the event of persistent contumacy, it would not be surprising if one Sunday the parish church were to tumble down, and bury me under its ruins. All the rest of the congregation, I may add, were to escape scot free. I felt that for Providence to decline tolerating such a hardened young culprit as myself any longer, would be natural enough; but I could not help thinking that the catastrophe prophesied would be hard on the proprietors of the demolished edifice, and would hardly reflect credit on the builder.

I remember, too, being informed that my father had promised to bring a cane home in his pocket for my especial behoof, and I trembled all over with a strange sort of rage, that was new to me, and which even now I should fail to describe in words, and I bit my lip and hardened my heart, but said nothing.

I remember once being “obstinate,” as the expression went, over my lessons. My mother tossed the book aside in a passion, and said—“You nasty little thing! I wish you had died instead of your sister.”



It was a cruel, thoughtless exclamation, and I treasured it up vindictively for a long while.

As I look back to early childhood, the quaintest of recollections come crowding up one after the other.

I wander away into the past till I lose myself in a warm, pleasant mist. Every now and then the clouds roll aside, and I see acted over again some circumstance so trivial that I wonder how it ever came to be fixed in my memory. Sometimes, too, I see persons and things "as through a glass, darkly," not sure whether my recollections are of the actual and substantial, or are merely fragments of dreams.

I have a dim remembrance of a sunshiny afternoon, and an old farmhouse with a thatched roof, and a tent pitched in a field, and of walking out past it into a dusty road, bordered by hedges, and of being told by a woman who accompanied my nurse that a fair was going to be held in the village, a statement that set me wondering, and made me wish that I could remain behind to participate in a mystery which even by the initiated was spoken of with such unction.

I remember standing at an upper window and seeing soldiers pass with flags flying. Where this could have happened I cannot say—certainly not in London.

I have a confused recollection of a great gaunt house, with a broad, old-fashioned staircase, shallow of step, and guarded by balusters rich in carving. I have a vision of statues and pictures, of big rooms, silent and dimly lighted, of windows with thick, dark-red curtains drawn across them, of a conservatory full of flowers, of men in livery, and an old gentleman with white hair, whose voice was kindly, but feeble. I have not the most distant idea what house this could have been, but for years afterwards its shadow fell on my dreams, and it inspired me, sleeping or waking, with a vague sense of dread, as though it had been haunted.

I remember a package of cocoa-nibs being opened in my presence. I had never seen such things before, and they frightened me. Perhaps I mistook them for insects.

I recollect sitting in a field, near Hampstead, from which there was an extensive view. My father was with me, and he pointed to a hill dimly visible on the horizon, and said it was the Hog's Back. A strange feeling of terror crept over me, and I longed to be safe on the other side of the hedge. I fancied a huge monster, that had been buried for ages, suddenly leaping up and rushing upon us with such enormous strides, that it would be impossible to escape from it.

I remember journeying by night over a wild, open spot, at the back of a britska. I was jammed in between the nurse and some

other female domestic, whom I have forgotten. There was a cold wind blowing, but I was wrapt up warm, and I had a delightful sense of participating in unhallowed mysteries. Suddenly, far away in the distance, gleamed a light. I suggested that it was a gas-lamp, and was pooh-poohed for my pains. As we drew nearer, it turned out to be a rick on fire. Soon afterwards I heard a scuffle behind me, and a couple of men—mysterious shadows they seemed in the night—jumped up behind the carriage. I was frightened, but the postboy hallooed, and cracked his whip, and the vagabonds, shouting gruffly, disappeared into the darkness. I felt that with such a postboy we need fear nothing; but I was none the less sensible of having escaped a great danger. Often afterwards did I hear the servants relate how narrowly we had been saved from highwaymen on Salisbury Plain. As the story proceeded, I always drew nearer to the fire, shuddered, and thought of that wild midnight journey with a kind of pleasant regret.

I recollect a fog in Hyde Park, and my father carrying me in his arms. There were strange shadows moving through the mist—apparently walking on air. I felt as though I were in a new world altogether, and enjoyed myself mightily, as if the darkness and confusion were part of a novel and entertaining game.

I recollect, too, lying awake in my little cot in the front nursery, watching the servants gossiping over their needlework, and listening to a barrel-organ playing in the street below. I dropped asleep, and when I woke up again the servants were still at work, but the candles were lighted, the blinds were drawn, and the barrel-organ was no longer to be heard. I thought it odd that people should stay up, as it then appeared to me, half through the night.

I remember a terrible dream I once had. I imagined that I stood in the nursery. It was winter time. The blinds were pulled down, the fire was blazing cheerfully, and the two maid-servants were sitting at the table gossiping over their work as usual. The room looked particularly snug, and the warm air was in pleasant contrast to the cold of the dark dreary landing outside. I stood by my little cot, and was feeling very happy when suddenly the valance was thrust aside and a gigantic hand appeared. It was very white and had taper fingers, one of them ornamented with a ring, and it clutched at me fiercely as if, could it only catch me, it would drag me into depths below. I tried to run away, but I was glued to the spot. I tried to scream, but my voice failed me. I stretched out my arms towards the two maid-servants, who went on talking and seemed insensible to all that was happening, my hair rose on end, and—I awoke.

I remember sitting in the drawing-room on a little stool by the hearthrug. The fire had burned low, and was full of caverns, and rocks, and stormy seas, and knights in armour, and enchanted forests. The candles had not yet been brought in, and my father lay on the floor with his head in my mother's lap. Both were singing, and as I listened I wished that the music could go on for ever. I thought it beautiful.

I recollect accompanying my mother on a round of visits. We seemed to call at houses innumerable, and we never saw any gentlemen, but always ladies. I watched them and wondered which was the most lovely. I decided in favour of a beautiful creature who looked as if she were made of wax. She had chestnut hair, and talked very slowly. I doubted whether she were quite the same as other people. There were several little birds in her room, and she had enormous bouquets of flowers on the table and on the chimney-piece. The air was close and rather sickly; the windows were shut and the blinds were drawn down. Looking at this nest of a little room, I could not believe that it was part of a house such as we lived in ourselves; I had a vague idea that it must have been built by the fairies.

I remember an impudent maid-servant flourishing a duster over the drawing-room table and saying that the ornaments were trumpery toys. Being short of fuel, she tore up one of my copy-books, in spite of my remonstrances, and thrust the pages in between the bars of the grate.

Every morning I used to come downstairs while the rooms were being cleaned up and march round and round the dining-room table humming songs. I was very happy on such occasions, but no doubt the servants voted me a nuisance.

I remember a barrel-organ of a peculiarly dismal *timbre* that used to visit our street late of a summer evening. It played one air with a particularly high note, which always made me feel inclined to cry. I used to think to myself "that poor man has been working all day and has earned nothing. Unless some one throws him a penny he will have to stay out all night."

A huge instrument with a drum behind it that was in the habit of grinding "Oh, mia Letizia," in the most ponderous, exhausted fashion, used to make me feel that existence was indeed a burden.

I recollect visiting a lady who had dark piercing eyes that seemed on fire and flashed so that they made me think of some supernatural creature. She looked at me till I was frightened and then she laughed, but not pleasantly. I was glad to get away from her. I was very much shocked at hearing her speak of her children as the "little wretches!"



I recollect a small volume of poetry that my father used to produce for my amusement on high days and holidays, saying it was one of the prizes he had gained at school. At the beginning of it was a picture of a bear coming out of a wood, part of the beast's body being hidden by the trunk of a tree. I used, I remember, to turn over the page with a half conviction that some day or other I should find the missing hind-legs on the reverse side of it. Further on in the same volume was a plate representing a lad with curly hair asleep in a wood, and near him a number of fairies dancing in a circle. It always filled me with awe.

I recollect wishing to give something to a crossing-sweeper. I was ignorant of the ways of the world and handed him a shilling and asked for sixpence change. I was laughed at by the maid-servant for doing so, but the man was very polite, touched his hat, and at once complied with my request.

At a still earlier period I was found in tears because a couple of huge bundles of dirty clothes had been rolled recklessly downstairs. I had no thought for the lives and limbs of the household that had been imperilled, but said, "Oh, the poor dear puddings, it must have hurt them so." I suppose they had been playthings to me and that I had learnt to love them.

I remember waking one morning and seeing a beautiful twelfth cake on the table, covered with ornaments. I was told that the cook had won it overnight in a "raffle." The statement filled me with awe. Night to me was always a period of mystery, and here seemed revealed one of the secrets of the darkness. I pictured to myself the baker's shop at which the raffle took place. It was a lurid conception as fantastic and unreal as the wildest nightmare of Doré.

I remember being taken to the Paddington Station to see the evening trains come in. I revelled in the light and bustle of that dingy old coalshed, and fancied myself in Paradise. Sometimes my father took me for a walk through some fields near the Harrow Road, and we stood at a signal station and watched the express dash madly past with red lights gleaming in front of the engine. In those days I made up my mind that if ever I were rich I would keep my own locomotive and on all proper occasions take my family out for a drive. On cold mornings I ran along the broad walk in Kensington Gardens, worked my arms like piston rods, and seeing the condensed breath from my mouth could almost imagine that I was an engine myself.

I recollect, but very vaguely, my little sister who was a year younger than I was, and how we used to go every morning to the baker's and be presented with a couple of new half-penny buns. I believe the good man gave us these unwholesome delicacies out

of pure openness of heart. He always seemed very glad to see us, pointed us out to his wife as though we were novelties, and called us a couple of little darlings.

One morning I awoke and the house seemed strangely quiet. I lay in my cot and felt puzzled. The blinds were down; the door was half open, and on the landing I saw my father in his dressing-gown, with his hand before his face. My mother was talking to him in a low broken voice, and her eyes were red with weeping.

In the afternoon I sat in the drawing-room with a paper and pencil scribbling eels, and serpents, and dragons, and all sorts of fanciful creatures that ran a good deal to fin and tail, wondering vaguely what had happened, being too dull and drowsy to be particularly curious about anything.

I recollect nothing more till I found myself in bed and not able to move. The room was dark and my father and mother both stood near. I was being fed with something out of a spoon which I fancied was "hare's gravy." Having once got hold of the idea I was loath to relinquish it, I imagined that I never took anything else but "hare's gravy," and when the white-headed old doctor said "Come, come, we are getting better now, suppose we try a little chicken broth," I burst into tears, and said with real concern, "No, don't give me anything but hare's gravy." It appeared a sort of ingratitude, now that I was getting strong, to turn my back on the friendly food that had done me so much good when I was ill.

For months past I seemed to have been tossing on a stormy sea. I fancied myself emerging from the longest night that had ever been known. By and bye I was allowed to sit up in bed, and I recollect that before I had fully recovered my strength, a couple of giggling maid-servants dragged me out from between the sheets and set me on my legs on the floor "just," as they said, "to see whether missie could walk." I was as weak as a feather, and tumbled down and burst into tears. My tormentors shrieked with laughter, and hastily tumbled me back into my cot.

I recollect lying motionless, impotent, but wide awake, and seeing the nurse pour some wine out of a bottle, toss off a glass herself and hand another glass to her companion. "We'll fill it up with water," she said, "missie will never find out the difference."

I remember being told that I was almost well now and being swathed curiously in flannels and shawls, and put in an arm-chair by my mother's bed. I clambered up and threw my arms round her neck, and a fat old woman in a grey gown, whom I had never

seen before, said that I must be a good girl, and that my "dear mamma" would not bear "worritting."

In course of time I discovered that I should never see my little sister again. Who broke the news to me, or whether it dawned upon my mind by degrees, I cannot tell. I doubt whether the fact shocked me much, even when I came to acknowledge it. I simply supposed that my sister was happier than any of the rest of us, and that she had become an angel. What the term meant I hardly knew, but it suggested the big painted window in church, the stillness of Sunday, a face always smiling, bright shining garments, and the most beautiful clouds from which you could look down, and see all that was happening in the world below. As for the words "never again," they rather puzzled me. I only knew that whatever people might say, I should once more see that dear little sister of mine some day or another.

In course of time I was as strong as ever I had been, and could feel a deep interest in the fact of my father having brought home some new coloured-silk handkerchiefs. I thought what beautiful flags they would make, and was told that I should have them for that purpose, when they were worn out. But by the time they were in holes, I felt that I was a big girl, and no longer had any need of the once coveted treasures.

I remember beginning to study geography, and how the maps seemed to me more fascinating and mysterious than any pictures. I remember too, making copies of these maps, especially one, on an immense scale, of India, which I tore up in a moment of passion. Oh, how I sorrowed over that act of vandalism. I cried bitterly, not for my own loss, but for the map's sake. I thought to myself, "You poor dear thing, you have been so good and kind to me, and I have turned against you. I am such an ungrateful little wretch. You were growing up so pretty, and now I can't join you together again. No, you don't reproach me, but your silence is worse than any scolding. Oh, I am such a little beast! I wish you could whip me."

I lay a-bed one night and dreamt of fairies. The whole room seemed full of them, and they came trooping in at the window. Very little people, and all white and glistening, but in shape no different to the ladies and gentlemen I saw out of doors. Some were kings and queens, some princesses, some knights in armour, but there were no poor fairies, and as they strutted about the bed and the floor, and scrambled up the chairs on to the table, they seemed to enjoy themselves mightily, and I wished they were a little bigger that we could become real friends, and live together in the silent woods, or in the enchanted valley where there were green leaves and bright flowers all the year round.



I remember opening a cupboard, and seeing a cake, and stealthily cutting a bit off. I cut my finger at the same time, and regarded the mishap as an interposition of Providence. I felt that I was on the highroad to the gallows, and as I stuffed the abstracted morsel down my throat, either it was very dry, or outraged conscience asserted its influence, for it nearly choked me.

I recollect buying a big paper balloon at the Pantheon, and not knowing what to do with it, when I had got it. But we became very good friends, and I liked it all the more because the housemaids laughed at it as useless and ugly.

I remember going to have my first tooth drawn. The fashionable operator said, "Lean back, my little lady, and let me feel inside your mouth." It was not long before I fancied that the gentleman was feeling very hard.

I recollect finding it very difficult to learn the sacrament part of the catechism. Caught by a gust of rage, I tore the book up, and flung the fragments out of the window. On reflection I felt that I had been guilty of sacrilege. Penalty; a whipping, and no damson tart for dinner.

I remember being taken to see a panorama. Before we started my mother said, to my utter amazement, and in a sing-song tone of voice that was highly exasperating, "Your father has made up his mind that if you put yourself in one of your tantrums, he will have you horsewhipped on the spot." I thought it a scandalous shame, that I should be insulted without provocation, but wisely held my peace, and merely looked sullen and impenetrable. I could not help wondering, however, who would carry the blood-thirsty resolution into effect, and at last decided that a policeman would be the proper party, and then the question that suggested itself was "where?" Hardly in full sight of the audience I reflected: perhaps in that mysterious cloak-room devoted half to suspended shawls and bonnets, half to lemonade and stale buns. But why *horsewhipped*? I repeated to myself. Was I an utter reprobate, as callous of body as of soul? My mind conjured up a vision of the ferocious instrument that a cabman wields in his fury. I recollected that I had once been threatened with a cane. I began to hate my mother for her vindictive menaces, and made up my mind that I would be utterly disgusted with the panorama, be its attractions what they might.

My mother, like most of her sex, was a great advocate for corporal punishment. Weak impatient natures cannot realize the wonder-working powers of a word or a glance. The less confidence we have in our arts of persuasion, the more are we inclined to trust to brute force. As a rule, women are not capable of governing. They want self-restraint, and bring what power they may possess

into contempt by a parade of inflexibility. They are too eager for an immediate result. They confound the maintenance of order with petty tyranny, and resolution with doggedness. They cannot let well alone. They worry and fidget, and fret, and neglect the whole for its parts, and having exasperated a household into rebellion, declare that mistresses will never be able to manage servants, unless they are allowed to flog them. In fact, the average woman's whole notion of discipline seems to be that everyone—idle little boys and girls, promoters of joint-stock companies, fast young ladies, and the destroyers of the Irish Church—ought to be whipped. “I would have such creatures well whipped” is the admired and invariable formula. Heaven help us, if ever in politics, the fair and gentle half of creation gains the upper hand!

To return. I remember a terrible explosion of wrath between my father and my mother on the occasion of a staggeringly long bill being sent in for about the fiftieth time, coupled with a remonstrance by no means of the politest. I had been told to get ready for a walk, and came innocently into the drawing-room in the midst of the affray. My mother was in tears, and my father furious. I thought him very cruel, though he had some excuse, for I found out afterwards that the peremptory demand for payment, and even the bill itself, had come upon him in the form of a surprise, at a time too, when he prided himself upon having got the unnecessarily large household expenses well under control. My mother fled the room, pursued by my heartfelt pity; and against my will I accompanied the barbarous husband—of all men the most long-suffering and affectionate—on a melancholy walk through Kensington Gardens. Neither of us spoke a word all the time we were out, and I felt that the father whom I had always loved dearly, had forfeited my good esteem for ever. But it is man's lot to bear the blame, let the follies of woman be what they may.

I recollect a tempest at the breakfast-table—more bills, and a threatened summons being the disturbing cause.

I remember one afternoon going into the drawing-room, and being struck with a sudden conviction that something was wrong, though I could hardly make out what. Several minutes passed, and neither my father nor my mother spoke a word, though they interchanged defiant glances. My mother's face was red, and her eyes gleamed strangely. Presently she muttered something indistinctly, rose from her chair, and moved towards the door. She walked unsteadily, and I fancied she must be ill. She turned on a sudden, and her lips moved as if she would speak; then in an instant down she fell, stiffly, like a statue thrown off its pedestal, without bending a knee, and lay on the floor insen-

sible. I was extremely alarmed. My father raised her, took her in his arms, and carried her upstairs. When he returned, he looked worried, but not anxious. He seated himself in his chair, and remained for some time without speaking. Some good genius whispered to me that I had better not question him. Twilight was fast closing in. I remained quite still gazing at the fire till tea time, and though I was perplexed and troubled I acted up to my resolution, and uttered never a word.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CISSY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY CONTINUED.

I HAVE come to a part of my life that I would gladly forget. I shall allude to it, but no more. The continuity of my story may suffer, but there are matters which it is painful even to remember. I may well be excused if I hurry on.

An estrangement has grown up between my father and mother. Those happy evenings, those tender dreamings in the twilight, the comfort, the trustfulness, the perfect peace of our little home have departed for ever. A reign of terror has ensued; we are harassed by bills and summonses, turbulent voices are heard at the front door in dispute with the servants, "warnings" are given and taken, my father resorts to angry expostulation, and my mother to tears. I am alarmed by the constant repetition of the words, "gross extravagance," "beggary," "the workhouse." A self-assertive, rough-voiced man calls one day, and soon afterwards a good deal of the drawing-room and dining-room furniture disappears. Terrible domestic "scenes" ensue, only half hidden by closed doors.

The early morning walks in the park have been discontinued. My father goes to the office alone, and sometimes when he returns in the evening my mother is very red in the face, and speaks indistinctly. On such occasions she laughs a good deal, and persists in talking, though papa glances at her angrily. If she tries to walk across the room she moves awkwardly, swaying from side to side, and either knocks something down, or falls herself. In the morning she is weak and irritable, cannot settle down to anything, and complains of feeling faint. She tells me she is suffering from a "weak habit," and that the doctor has ordered her as much in the way of stimulants as she can take. She is very impatient over my lessons, only half explains difficulties, and calls me obstinate and silly because I cannot understand her. Sometimes she throws the book aside in a pet, and after a few angry words sails from the room. Sometimes she says that she is too unwell



to hear me do anything more, that my father ought to teach me himself, and that all the trouble of the household is thrown on her shoulders, while "other people"—meaning, I can only suppose, papa and myself—go out to enjoy themselves as they please. She says that her life is a misery, and that she knows everyone hates her, and that we all wish her in her grave. One evening when I am reading in the newspaper about the pantomimes, and just as I come to the magic words "Hi presto, clown, harlequin, and columbine!" she bursts upon me, crying out, "I know none of you care for me a bit; I am sure you will all be glad when I am in my coffin!" I am much shocked, and lay aside the paper, having lost all relish for theatricals. I feel the deep injustice of the accusation, but can answer nothing. She bursts into tears, and I am very unhappy indeed.

We have few visitors now, and no longer give any dinner-parties. Papa and mamma never go out even to the theatre, and by my father's orders all invitations are civilly declined. My mother uselessly complains to me, for want of any better confidant, and says bitterly that my father won't let her stir out of doors, because he grudges buying her any new dresses, that he has lost all love for her, that if a woman marries she must make up her mind to be ill-treated and neglected, that husbands think wives were invented only to be their slaves, that there was a time when papa used to bring her home nice presents and beautiful bouquets for the opera, and used to make pretty speeches, and be very particular how she dressed; but that everything of that sort has gone by long ago. She complains that he sticks at the office instead of trying to raise himself to something better, advises me if ever I grow up not to marry a struggling man, who will think more of his business than of his wife, and attributes my father's want of success to his not having gone enough into society, and to his having neglected to "cultivate" rich relations.

Time passes, and my mother takes to lying in bed for days together. She is continually sending for me to her room, and then forgetting what she had meant to say to me. Sometimes she mumbles a few words unintelligibly, turns on her side, and apparently drops off to sleep. Then I leave the apartment, stepping softly. Sometimes she asks me in an indifferent tone how I am getting on with my lessons. Sometimes she inquires if I have a few coppers to lend her, or else tells me to go downstairs to papa, and ask for some wine or some brandy, or even for some beer, if he won't give anything else. I am very sorry for her, and wish she could get well, but though I do as she orders, papa only looks annoyed, and if I have a sixpence in my money-box, and give it her, she sends the servant out for some brandy, which, instead of

strengthening her, seems to make her worse. I am afraid she will never recover, and that she will die, and I sit in my little room of an afternoon, and cry bitterly. She sends for me one day, and to my astonishment and grief, speaks quite angrily. There is a fierce look in her eyes, and she asks me hoarsely whether I am not glad that she is lying neglected and ill, with only servants to wait upon her, whether I do not hope she may die, and if papa has packed off to that beastly office as usual, without wishing her good morning. I am ready to burst into tears, and she adds: "There run along, you nasty little thing; go and enjoy yourself, and forget all about your poor sick mother, who will soon be dead and out of the way."

At breakfast and luncheon I lay out mamma's tray myself. I take great pains to make it look nice and tempting, but it is usually put aside almost untouched. Mamma says food "goes against her," and that "slops" make her feel uncomfortable. She asks me if I would mind begging papa for a little brandy. She has a "sinking" sensation, and has been falling from one faint-fit into another all the night through. I am afraid for her, and run down stairs, but meet with little success.

Now and then my mother, looking wretchedly ill, with blood-shot eyes, and a thick confused voice, dresses and comes into the drawing-room, and sits in an arm-chair, making a pretence of reading a novel or a newspaper. She is very irritable on such occasions, and says books are so abominably printed nowadays, that it is impossible to read them.

We never have any comfortable meals now. The meat is always either raw or burnt to a cinder, red on one side, black on the other. We hurry over dinner, as if in despatch of an unpleasant duty. We have a dirty table-cloth, and the vegetables are served up on plates. At breakfast we have a chipped earthenware teapot, without a handle. We hastily swallow some bread and butter, the former hacked off in savage junks, and the meal is ended. The servants, my mother says, in explanation of everything, are so careless, and she is sure they smash the crockery to bits on purpose.

We have no stair-case carpet, no carpet in the drawing-room, and the dining-room chairs, which are sold, have been replaced by cane-bottomed seats from the nursery. Half our plate has gone, and all our china. We have common earthenware now, either of the "Greck" or "willow" pattern, and little enough even of that. My father talks of "breaking up his household," and the term frightens me, for I regard it as the prelude to the Union. Occasionally an acquaintance who knew us in better days calls and leaves a card, and we eye him furtively from behind the window-

curtains, which are coated with dirt, and which we dare not shake for fear of the spiders and beetles, and my mother looks vicious, and I am reminded that wives who have poor husbands and children, and have to slave in the kitchen, and be always mending stockings and looking after the servants—of whom, by-the-bye, we have now only one—must make up their minds to be treated as drudges, and of course can't expect to mix in civilized society.

But the topic is a painful one, and I gladly hasten on. One of the last and most melancholy recollections that I have of my once happy home, is my mother blurting out to me savagely one morning, after a lengthened interview with my father: "You will be glad to hear, Cecilia, that we are all ruined. What I have expected for a long time has happened at last. There has been a grand quarrel between your father and his employers. He has lost his situation at the office. This is what comes of being independent, and instead of living as a gentleman, hiring yourself out as a common workman."

She flung herself out of the room in a fury, and I felt as if my heart had ceased to beat, and as though I were sinking through the floor.

## CHAPTER V.

### CISSY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY CONTINUED.

ONE day papa took me on his knee and said thoughtfully, "I wonder how my Cissy would like to go to school?"

I looked up in his face and smiled. But something in its expression troubled me. I laid my head against his breast and whispered softly, "Cissy would like always to remain with her dear papa!"

Nothing more was said at the time, but a few days afterwards my father again took me on his knee and said, "Cissy is growing up now, and I want her to be a clever little woman. I want her to go into the country and get strong. I want her to have friends of her own age, to play about in the fields, and to learn games and be happy. I want her to be useful and self-dependent, and when I am a very old man, with white hair and no one to care for me, she shall be my little housekeeper and manage everything, and see that I don't take what would disagree with me, or get into mischief."

"Oh, papa!" I cried, "I will go to school and learn everything. And I do so wish we could have a little cottage of our own. I would be such a good little housekeeper, and we would be oh so happy."

After this I was continually saying to myself, "I am quite a



big girl now ; I am going to school." I tried to look solemn and dignified as became a young person who was on the point of exchanging the little world of home for the perils and snares of the much bigger world out of doors. I tried to put away childish things as much as possible. I talked importantly of prizes and holidays as if I really knew something about such matters. I read over again certain of my books which professed to describe school life as it really is and portrayed it as it certainly is not, and I gathered together all the little odds and ends, the divers favourite and useless trifles—that I had made up my mind to take with me, full a-month before the day fixed for my departure—about the same time in fact that the real pupils of Mrs. Thorold were congratulating themselves on the fact that their holidays had only just commenced.

I walked about the house singing songs of triumph ; not that I was glad to leave my home, but I felt that I was going to take a step in life which would raise me in my own estimation and in that of other people ; I felt that at last I was going to be like other girls whom I had long secretly envied, that I was in a fair way of becoming clever and useful, and that I had a sacred duty entrusted to me—to work very hard indeed, so that by the time papa became an old white-headed man I should be wise enough and rich enough to support him and make him as happy as he had made me.

My mother said little concerning my forthcoming departure, but once when I blundered in the sacrament part of the catechism she muttered between her teeth, " You will find, Cecilia, that you won't be allowed quite your own way at school. If you don't take the trouble to learn things you will have them well flogged into you."

I shuddered and felt vicious. I made some fresh mistake ; I am afraid on purpose. My mother flung the book aside in a passion, and, without a word, sailed majestically from the room.

The eventful day dawned at last. I had seen my luggage brought down into the entrance hall overnight, and had disputed with my mother concerning the propriety of taking a certain favourite doll with me. Sophronia was a lovely creature, and I could not bear the thought of parting with her even for a few months. It was nothing to me that school-girls, as my mother said, were too big for dolls, and that I should be laughed at. No one, I felt, could be too big to admire Sophronia ; no one, I was convinced, could possibly be moved to laughter by a creation that was beauty itself. I was obstinate, and carried the day. I celebrated my victory in a far-sounding pæan. Sophronia was packed up. I may add that I had christened my favourite myself. I

chose a sonorous, full-bodied name as appropriate to a divinity who was above the average size, stout of limb, moon-faced and ruddy, with flaxen hair in abundance, and gloriously apparelled.

I awoke early the next morning while the air was yet cool and fresh and the streets quite silent, and oh it seemed such a long while yet to the afternoon. I was to start a little after two, and luncheon—*my* dinner—was to be ready at a quarter to one. I loved my home, but I was eager to be gone. I wanted to be made a great strong girl and to be useful to papa. I fancied myself a busy, laughing, rosy-cheeked little housekeeper with a bunch of keys jingling at my side, and he an old man with long white hair, seated in a big comfortable chair by the fire, and then a mist came down over my eyes, and I hid my face against the pillow and stifled a sob.

I had some strange fantastic notions in my silly little head. For days past I had been busy trying to imagine what sort of a place school would be, and bit by bit I had put together a sort of picture-puzzle, one part being supplied by the descriptions of my father, whom I had examined straitly on the subject, another by my favourite story books, and a greater part still by pure imagination.

I began to have a firm belief in the reality of a great old-fashioned red brick house covered here and there with ivy, and surrounded by gardens and orchards and green fields. I fancied I could see hundreds of girls, big and little, and of all ages, romping about, or playing with their pets, or sitting reading in quiet corners, or walking up and down with their arms round each other's necks, settling what they would do in the afternoon or discussing the difficulties of their morning's lessons. I could see rosy little mites tumbling about like kittens, and tall staid girls reproving them with a frown, or a few gentle words, or an uplifted finger. I could fancy the monitors telling the children under their charge not to be so noisy or such tom-boys, and calling to them and smoothing their hair and putting their dress to rights. I could almost hear the rooks cawing overhead, and see them circling round and round in the air and perched on the top branches of the wide spreading elm trees. And as the dream proceeded, I could imagine the bell in the little white box at the top of the house beginning to sway slowly to and fro until it clanged hoarsely, then the girls would gather up their books, kiss a fond good-bye to their pets and hurry in obedience to its summons across the field towards the schoolroom.

I built the most absurd castles in the air and believed in them implicitly. I had no anxiety and very little curiosity, for I was

eager to explore the bright prospect that was opening itself before me, and was fully convinced that my dreams would all come true. I made up my mind that I should be very happy indeed, and settled how I should behave were such and such things to happen, and drew fancy portraits of one or two of the girls whose names I had already heard, and fancied myself going up to them and being rather shy at first, but shewing my doll, and becoming very good friends with them by degrees. I pictured to myself our arrival at the house, and the good old schoolmistress—a stately dame with silver hair, and a rustling silk dress, and a gold watch guard—taking me by the hand and patting me on the head and telling me all that I was expected to do, and after that leading me to the schoolroom and introducing me to my companions, who would listen to her respectfully, and then shake me by the hand, or perhaps kiss me, and make me happy at once.

In the morning my father took me for a walk in Kensington Gardens, and I went over my dreams again and again till I was quite carried away, and in my joy sang out triumphantly, and bounded on to the grass, and felt that I was a great, noisy, romping schoolgirl already.

And then I was ashamed of myself for being so happy. I felt that I was a nasty selfish little thing to be so glad to get away from home. But then again, I justified myself by reflecting that I had good reason to be glad if I was going to be made a great strong girl and useful to papa; and I went up to him and caught hold of his arm and laid my head against it affectionately, and he looked down upon me and put his hand round my neck, and it struck me all of a sudden that though he smiled he looked sorrowful, and conscience whispered to me, “Oh, Cissy, you bad girl! and all the time you are laughing and romping away your time at school, poor papa will be sitting in his office, working oh so hard, and with nobody to go out walking with him, or be glad when he comes home, or eager to kiss him, or ready to see that his slippers have been laid out and that the hot water is waiting for him in his room.”

I felt inclined to cry, and papa patted me gently on the shoulder, and that made my heart feel fuller than ever. I walked on some way with a choking in my throat, not able to say a word. “And yet,” thought I to myself, “I am such a little thing, he can’t miss me so very much.”

By the time luncheon was ready I had recovered my spirits. But I was too excited to eat much. I got up from the table as soon as I could and began wandering restlessly about the house. I could not settle down to anything. It seemed as if ten minutes past two would never come. At last my mother called me to her



room to be dressed, and soon afterwards I heard the front door close with a bang, and guessed my father had gone out to fetch the cab. Presently there was a grinding of wheels on the gravel newly laid down on the carriage road, the house bell rang, and I felt that the important moment had come at last. I threw my arms round my mother's neck and kissed her. Conscience whispered to me that I had not loved her as I ought to have done, that I was a selfish little wretch devoid of natural affection, and that I was leaving her without being really sorry. Thus reproached I walked slowly downstairs and squeezed her hand and made up my mind that when I came home for the holidays I would be a very different girl indeed. The luggage was being tied on to the top of the cab by the driver, a red-faced surly-looking man, in a battered hat and a thick blue coat buttoned close up to his neck. My father called to me from the dining-room door and asked me if I was quite ready, saying we must look sharp or we should miss the train. Again I turned and kissed my mother. She looked down at me regretfully, and I noticed that a tear stood in her eye. The last thing I saw as we drove away was her figure at the open window. She waved a handkerchief towards me with an air of assumed gaiety that strongly contrasted with the really sorrowful expression of her face. I felt that I had been a bad ungrateful thing and nestled the closer to my father, and was ready to burst into tears.

However, the bustle of the streets and the excitement of driving rapidly past familiar objects soon restored my good spirits, and as we turned past the Charing Cross Hospital into the Strand I was lost in admiration of the shops and of the crowd of busy passers-by. Now, thought I to myself, we have reached the very heart of the city.

We dashed up to the railway station, as it seemed to me, in fine style, and a porter opened the door, seized the luggage, rattled it away in a truck to be labelled, and I was glad that papa held me tight by the hand, for I felt that if left to myself, the din of hammers, of hurrying feet and roaring engines, of bells and railway whistles, would confound me.

I was glad when we were safe in a first-class carriage, and I could look out of the window, and watch the man in a sort of pit underneath me greasing the wheels. Then my attention was engrossed by the passengers inside a train that glided through the station close by our side; and by the stolid people on the platform, who seemed to think no more of going a journey than of walking across the street. And yet I was impatient, and though the five-minute bell had rung, it seemed to me as if the train were never going to start.

Presently, however, the carriage trembled, jerked once or twice, there was a grinding and squeaking of wheels, and we were off. The bookstall floated by slowly, the door marked "First-class waiting-room" rather faster, and the refreshment-saloon which was nearly at the end of the platform whirled past with delightful rapidity.

I had plenty to occupy my attention now, and I felt that it was no time for asking questions, that objects of novelty and interest were crowding upon me every moment, and that if the journey could be protracted for hours it would be only the more enjoyable.

On we went at a tremendous pace as I fancied, stopping at every station we came to, until at last, when we were about seven-and-a-half miles from Ludgate-hill, I fancied we must have penetrated to very remote parts of the country indeed.

By-and-bye there was a tremendous whistling from the engine, and a white-haired old gentleman who sate on the seat opposite to me, put his head out of the window and seemed very anxious. I asked papa if this were Workington—the station at which we were to stop—but he answered no, only Fallowfield Junction; that we had some miles to go yet, so I gave all my attention to passing objects, though I could not help wondering how any old gentleman could go on reading a dull stupid newspaper, when so much that was beautiful and surprising and worth seeing was visible outside the window.

How the telegraph wires puzzled me. Now they were right overhead, now on a level with us, now almost at our feet; now they inclined this way, now that; now the lines were drawn close in together, now again they parted as if bound for all points of the compass, met again with a swoop, and rushed off to meet a tall post that came hurrying down upon us like a huge under-fed Life Guardsman.

Workington station, when reached, disappointed me immensely. It was a little bit of a place; a mere shed, instead of the grand terminus I had expected. We got out of the carriage, a porter, on a hint from my father, ran off to the van for the luggage, and scarcely had it been tumbled out of the train, when the engine puffed disdainfully away, dragging the carriages after it, and leaving us on the platform alone with a man in a velveteen jacket, who took our tickets, an old woman in a huge bonnet, and a labourer with a very brown and wrinkled face, in dusty ankle jacks, and a green smock frock. And as for the town itself, what had become of the busy crowded streets, the wide river loaded with craft, and the grand houses rising above us in crescents and terraces? I felt quite aggrieved, and when we climbed into an open fly, of which the seats seemed enormously high up, and

commanded an excellent view of the surrounding fields, I began to hope sincerely, and almost to pray, that the continuation of my dream might not be dispelled as rudely as its commencement had been.

We were on a dusty high road that drove doggedly on between flat fields which spread on one side till they were lost in mist, and on the other to some rising ground a mile or two distant. It was a melancholy country, and though it was a bright sunshiny evening, the wind whistled drearily through the hedges, and I felt cold, and crept close in under my father, and held his hand very tight, feeling that we were now near to our journey's end, and that I should not have him with me much longer. A strange sorrowful sensation crept over me, and I wished that I could wake up and find the journey all a dream, and know that I was never to leave that snug home that I knew so well, and which was dearer to me now than ever. I wondered what mamma was doing, and whether the carriages were winding slowly round and round the Park as usual, and whether the people in the streets were going home to tea in nice warm rooms, where they could read by the fire and talk to other people who knew them and loved them, and then I was seized by a misgiving that had intruded itself more than once already, though never so strongly as now when I was miles and miles away from home; that I was such a little thing, and should be such a helpless mite in a great school, amongst romping boisterous girls, many of them double my age.

At last papa said, "This is Earlsferry. That red-brick wall belongs to Mrs. Thorold's garden. We shall be in front of the house in another minute."

Oh, how my heart began to beat! I strained my eyes to see what was coming, and hardly noticed some small white-washed cottages with thatched roofs, and a strip of neglected garden in front of them, before which we were now passing.

At last, we turned a corner, and drew up with a jerk.

I raised my head, and as I did so, I was not so much disappointed as utterly confounded.

It was a long, two-storied house, with a flat monotonous brick-front white-washed. It had a peculiarly prim and clean look that was chilling. The upper windows, devoid of curtains and with only a muslin blind drawn across the lower panes, had a gaunt, inhospitable expression. The door, painted a dark sombre green, was paneled and ornamented in an old-fashioned style, with quaint stiff scroll work. On either side of it stood, sentinel-wise, a tall fluted column squeezed flat against the wall, and the lion's head, from which the knocker hung in the shape of a solid iron ring, had a malignant and truculent cast of countenance. The



strip of ground in front of the house was neatly gravelled and divided from the turnpike road by some dark-coloured wooden palings rising from a low brick wall. To right and left curiosity was baffled by a clump of evergreens, which clung to the sides of the building and made me think of whiskers. Altogether my new home had a dismal and forbidding appearance, and my spirits sank considerably in consequence.

The door was opened by a grey-headed old butler, lame of one leg, who without saying a word proceeded to assist the flyman in hoisting down the luggage. This done, he piled it up in the hall, asked if the driver was to wait, and being answered in the negative, informed my father of the exact amount of fare due, as if the hackney coachmen in that part of the country were a race of beings whose cunning and dishonesty could not be sufficiently guarded against. Then, having carefully closed the door he preceded us to the drawing-room, promising that he would at once inform Mrs. Thorold, who happened to be in the garden, of our arrival.

It was the prettiest little room possible, and my spirits rose directly I went into it. It was low in the ceiling, and opened into a garden with, I thought, the brightest flowers and smoothest lawn I had ever seen. It was beautifully furnished, not showily or expensively, but so as to be light and cheerful in the warm weather, and snug in the winter. The walls, with their painted trellis work, overrun by green leaves, purple convolvulus, sweet-pea and jasmine, formed a perfect verandah. The chairs looked as if they were made on purpose to lull you to sleep, and the cushions were protected by a flowered chintz of such surprising whiteness and brilliancy that I almost fancied it must have been washed in snow by the fairies, and never used by any one but those dainty little people since. I noticed that the carpet was very thick, and so soft that on putting your foot down it rose above your ankle like grass. The round table in the middle of the room held a vase full of red and white roses—the last of the season—surrounded by a number of handsomely-bound books, also some half-dozen quaint, and perhaps valuable ornaments, including a card-case that rested under a glass-shade on a red velvet cushion, and looked as if it had been spun with threads of golden gossamer. I must not forget either, a work-basket—literally such—made of wicker-work, painted white and gold, and lined with blue silk. Near it lay some half-finished needlework, and inside it the usual odds and ends, to wit, reels of cotton, needles, a bright thimble, and a slim gleaming pair of scissors, packed away carefully, each in its appointed place. Though it was still August, the evening was chilly, and a fire had been lighted in the beautifully

polished grate. As I looked round at the pictures, mostly water colour drawings, dimly seen against the walls, at the chiffoniers with their glass-doors, and shelves lined with curiosities, at the two embroidered screens near the fireplace, the great comfortable arm chairs, and the sofa in the dark corner away from the draught; as I heard the wind whistling drearily outside, and shaking the ivy leaves that overhung the windows, I thought that when the darkness closed in, and not a sound was to be heard, and the fire sunk low in the grate, and threw great broad quivering shadows over the floor and walls, it must be the dearest, coziest, little room in the world,—one in which you could sit of a winter evening, and read tales about shipwrecks, and desert islands, and sing your doll to sleep, and be dreamily, perfectly happy.

Presently the door opened softly, and as I turned, startled from my reverie, my heart again began to beat rapidly. It was the schoolmistress,—how like and yet how unlike what I had expected. She was below the middle height, and rather stout. She wore the stiff rustling black silk dress that I had assigned to her, but her hair was only slightly tinged with grey, and she had an expression of face that quite puzzled me. At first, it repelled, but when she spoke and smiled, and I looked at her more closely, it seemed full of kindness, and I wondered why I had not fallen in love with it at once. And yet, even as the reflection crossed my mind, I felt that in reality I distrusted her. She uttered a few soft words, and laid her small white hand on my head, and caressed me as if we were quite old friends, and yet somehow, though I felt grateful, I was slightly afraid of her. One moment I said to myself that she would be almost a mother to me; the next, I shuddered and wished she would not press me so close to her, but let me stand by papa, and hold his hand as long as I could.

At length, my dear, dear father spoke about going, and oh, how sick at heart I felt. I longed to rush towards him and cry, “Oh, take me back, take me back, it is no use my trying to be a great, strong, useful girl, I shall never be anything but a silly little mite whose heart would break if she could not see her dear papa, very, very often, and know that he was well and happy,” but the schoolmistress held me firmly, though gently, to her side, and presently self-respect whispered to me that little thing as I was I must show that I had courage and dignity, that I had made a solemn promise and must act up to it, and that I should only grieve my father and show contemptible weakness if at the very outset I lost all self-control and allowed myself to be conquered by a momentary misgiving.

“But surely,” said the schoolmistress, “you don’t think of leaving already; we dine at a quarter to six, and my daughter

Aurora, who is my right hand and even more, will be in from the village in a few minutes. I shall really be sorry if you miss seeing her. It is a long walk, too, from here to Workington, and it will be late when you arrive in town. I am afraid you will find us but dull company, but I really hope you will allow us to show you what hospitality we can. I assure you," she continued, laughing, "we lead such a very retired life here that when anybody from the outer world visits us, we are almost inclined to lay violent hands upon the rash explorer and detain him by force."

Oh, how I wished papa would stay. I looked towards him imploringly, but he answered Mrs. Thorold without meeting my eye. Oh, how glad I was to hear him in a few words accept the invitation.

In my happiness I looked up in the schoolmistress's face, and smiled. She smiled in return, and asked me one or two questions, which I answered rather too freely, perhaps, but in a way that made her laugh. She patted me on the head, and told me that when Miss Aurora came in I should be introduced by her to some of my schoolfellows.

Scarcely had she finished speaking when the door opened, and there entered a lady whose peculiar and extraordinary beauty struck me with amazement.

She was tall and graceful as a lily. Her countenance reminded me of the angelic faces I had seen in a church-window at home. It had the perfect repose of a statue, but none of its rigidity. It was a complete oval with utterly faultless features. The eyes were a tender blue, veiled by long, silky lashes, and beaming with an expression of mild, passionless benignity. The brow rose with the gentle, dignified curve belonging to the highest type of classical beauty. The face was eloquent of that sublime unfathomable tranquillity seen on the dead; solemnly calm, unmarked by a single line of care. It seemed incapable of being moved to a tumult of laughter or tears. I could almost fancy that the spirit of the beautiful apparition before me rested with folded wings, and contemplated the affairs of the every-day world, its meannesses, and sorrows, and petty troubles, with the tender compassionate sympathy of an angel or a goddess. A sojourner on earth Miss Aurora might be, it seemed impossible that she could be of it. Her complexion lacked colour, but it was by no means suggestive of ill health; I could imagine that it was white merely, because brilliancy of hue would have detracted from the majesty of that calm, benignant face. However, as I sat watching the schoolmistress's daughter, by degrees two things occurred to me; first, that the lips were too thin and the mouth straight and inflexible; secondly, that the chin was rather obtrusively prominent. A perpendicular line drawn



from the upper lip downwards, would have fallen within it. But the ears were small and translucent as some beautiful, delicate shell held up in the sunlight, the hair bound in a knot, severely simple, at the back of the Grecian head, was of just that hue and texture which women envy so much, and which is scarcely ever seen, and when Miss Aurora spoke her voice, though eminently unsympathetic, was bright, clear, and melodious.

The goddess's hands though perfect in form were not noticeably small, and the fingers were firm and pliant. The feet which lay half hidden by her dress, were artistically faultless, but they would not have excited the envy of any pain-enduring belle, who regards the taste of the Chinese as decisive in such matters. The boots were not fashionably pointed, but ruthlessly cut off square at the toes. Though well made, they were stout and had rather thick soles, and a row of grim, uncompromising steel buttons ran down the centre; it was easy to see that Miss Aurora had boldly sacrificed elegance to comfort and utility.

At the time I had no notion what the goddess's age might be, but I should say now that she was about two and twenty. Yet she had the self-possession and suave dignity of a woman many years older. What rather surprised me was that as she talked to my father her expression never varied in the least. She reclined easily but almost motionless in a tall backed chair near the fire. She spoke with one elbow resting on the arm of the seat, and her long white fingers toyed gently with a plain gold chain that hung round her neck and lost itself in the folds of her dress. Her gown was of ordinary material, but beautifully made, and with a crisp, daintily clean look, that in a warm, comfortable room was delightful, but which in a colder apartment might have seemed chilling. As I looked at Miss Aurora I felt that I could worship her. I was surprised to hear her talk on ordinary topics, like the rest of the world, and could hardly believe that she ate, drank, and slept like other people. I longed to touch her or to kiss her beautiful forehead, and forgot everything but the fact of her being before me. The room seemed to darken, and a halo to surround her. For me her beautiful face and figure were the only things existing. For the moment I forgot even poor papa. I felt that I could sit at her feet, and gaze at her, and listen to the calm flow of that musical voice for ever.

Miss Aurora turned away from my father, to whom she was speaking, and her eyes met mine. A curious half-gratified, half-troubled look came over her face when she observed the wrapt expression of my small countenance. She bent down towards me, and took my hand in hers; as she did so a strange thrill pervaded

me. I felt as if in a dream, and could neither move nor look in another direction.

"Well, Cissy," she said, "I hope you will be happy at school. You must trust us and learn to love us, and we shall always, I hope, be the best of friends. You shall see your father again before he goes, but I want to take you out now, and introduce you to some of your schoolfellows."

She spoke in a clear and firm though subdued voice, and her words had a metallic ring as if played on an instrument. I had never heard tones so musical and yet so utterly without tenderness. The words were considerate, but seemed part of a form used over and over again, till its utterance had become purely mechanical.

Yet as I listened I wished the goddess would go on speaking for ever. A strange drowsy sensation crept over me, and I felt as if cold water were trickling down my back. When she finished the charm was still upon me, and I could answer nothing. I felt that I ought to speak—to thank her, and I tried to do so, but though my lips moved, I was powerless to frame a reply.

Holding my small hand firmly in her long white fingers, she led me from the room. We crossed the entrance hall, passed down steps and through a long, dark corridor, and came to a door. Miss Aurora opened it, closed it deliberately behind her, turned the key, and we were in the playground. It was not the pleasant green meadow I had expected, but a forlorn and irregularly shaped patch of gravel, surrounded partly by the walls of the building we had left, partly by a pitched hoarding, and a number of outhouses of various sizes, some being of wood, tarred, and others of white-washed brick.

We crossed towards a big bow window that glared upon us from the opposite side of the desert.

"It is the school-room," said Miss Aurora.

As she spoke even these few words the cold water again trickled slowly down my back.

We entered.

It was a dismal apartment if ever there was one. The walls were whitewashed and stained in many places with smudges of ink. There was no covering to the floor, and the furniture consisted of three long tables painted black, four benches varnished, a mahogany desk near the fireplace, and one of precisely the same kind in the recess of the window. On each side of the empty grate stood a stiff arm-chair. Some half-dozen girls who were reading as we entered, rose and stood respectfully before the goddess.

It was to the tallest of them that Miss Aurora addressed herself.

"Chardstock," she said, "I bring with me a new friend of yours and of mine, and put her under your protection."

Chardstock, a tall, strongly made girl, with a freckled face, a coarse obstinate-looking mouth, and a sullen expression of countenance, came towards me and shook my hand with an air that said plainly, "you are a little beast, and I should like to box your ears."

Miss Aurora eyed her calmly, and the girl dropped her head, let my hand fall at the same time, and stood looking on the ground, slowly drawing one foot across the other.

"Remember what I told you," said the goddess, in a voice so low and clear that it seemed to float from a distance, and then taking my hand again, she turned and led me from the room.

I was so glad to get back to papa.

"The girls are going to have tea in a few minutes," said Miss Aurora, "would you like to take it with them, or by yourself in Mrs. Samson's room? If you remain in the house you can come into the dining-room when you have finished, and be near your papa till he goes away."

"Oh, thank you, ma'am," I answered, gratefully, "I should like that so very much." I felt inclined to squeeze the goddess's hand very tight indeed, or to throw my arms round her neck, and kiss her, but she had such a stern, solemn look, that I was frightened, and drew back. She pulled a bell at her side, and as she did so I noticed that her face had a curiously wrapt expression as if her spirit had left her for the moment, and had gone up to seek counsel of the angels. So at least I thought in my childish enthusiasm. The bell was answered by a very old lady, who smiled in a way that she meant to be encouraging, but which, from lack of teeth, was rather cavernous, and without saying a word she led me away to her room.

It was a dull, physicy-smelling little retreat, with a couple of windows looking out on to the turnpike road. It was furnished usefully, but roughly. The walls were panelled, and painted white. A solid table, like a kitchen dresser, was cumbered with strips of flannel, fresh-smelling linen lately home from the wash, socks in course of repair, pocket-handkerchiefs piled up one above the other, like muffins, a damaged straw hat, a diminutive pair of slippers, and a work-box overflowing with loose threads, tape, scraps of pink calico, and reels of cotton. The floor was covered with matting. The chairs, with one exception, had wooden seats and stiff backs, that set rough treatment at defiance. A chest of drawers, surmounted by some bookshelves, faced the windows, but the library, so far as I could see, was, as respected its contents, tedious, and in a dilapidated condition. The only attempt at genuine ornamentation was an old-fashioned convex mirror, in a broad gilt frame, over the fire-place, which exhibited every object in the room alarmingly out of drawing.



I had no appetite for my tea. I wanted to get back to papa, and though I was afraid to refuse the two thick slices of bread-and-butter, and the blue mug of milk-and-water that were placed before me, I rather wished that the food, which choked me, and seemed inexhaustible, would disappear of its own accord. In the meanwhile I could not help thinking how nice it would be to sit of an evening on one of those quaint little benches in the recess of the windows, and to watch the people passing along the road outside. I liked looking at pedlars, and tramps, and sturdy men in gaiters and velveteen jackets, who carried big sticks, and walked fast, and looked straight in front of them, and seemed as if they had a long way to go, and wanted very much to get to their journey's end. I used to make up stories about them, and could fancy them walking on and on till it was quite dark, and then arriving at some inn in a lonely little town, where all the people had gone to bed, and meeting with strange adventures.

The view from the housekeeper's room was not a cheerful one, but it was suggestive. On the opposite side of the road a high red-brick wall, coated with moss, separated us from what I then thought quite a forest of tall sombre pines. The feathery branches swayed backwards and forwards in the rising wind, and from time to time a deep-toned flood of sound came pouring through them, as if the waters of the neighbouring river had broken loose, and were rushing upon us greedily to swallow us up. A few yards beyond the entrance-gate the road turned abruptly away, almost at a right angle, towards the stream. In the gathering twilight I could not make out what became of it, but it appeared to dive down into the river, and to be lost.

As I sate at my tea, every now and then I heard voices shouting in the distance. They sounded very mysterious, and made me think of the storm-fiends broken loose, but in answer to my inquiries, the old housekeeper told me that it was only people by the water-side who wanted to cross, and who were calling out "over" to the ferryman.

It was getting cold, and I shivered. I felt that were I at home I could have enjoyed the dreary scene before me. Things being as they were, it was decidedly too dismal.

At last, after I had been told more than once that I must not be in such a hurry, and that the ladies had only just begun dinner, I was allowed to return to my father. The old housekeeper went with me, and tapped at the door.

"Come in," said Miss Aurora quietly, and when she saw me the merest suggestion of a smile appeared on her face, and she moved a hassock towards the fireplace, and motioned to me to sit down upon it.

I thought the dining-room, with its red curtains, and heavy flock paper, and thick carpet, and dark, gleaming mahogany furniture, a very comfortable room, but rather gloomy. I looked up at the portrait of a stout old gentleman over the side-board, and wondered who it represented, and whether it was considered a good likeness.

Papa and the goddess absorbed all my attention. No one spoke to me, but I was glad of that. I had forgotten the melancholy landscape, and was happy in my own thoughts, and wished to be left alone.

At length dinner, which seemed to me a long business, and a much more formal concern than any meal I had been accustomed to at home, came to an end, and we went into the drawing-room, which looked very cheerful and pleasant indeed in comparison with the rather oppressively-comfortable room we had just left. Coffee was brought in, and then I began to feel restless and despondent, for time was creeping away, and I knew that papa would soon be going.

Indeed, within a few minutes he rose, shook hands with the goddess and my schoolmistress, and, after a few parting words, left the room. I followed him eagerly. He caught me in his arms, and I hugged him as if I could never let him go.

"God bless you, Cissy," he whispered in my ear. "Remember your promise. Be a brave good girl. You will soon be strong, and clever, and useful now that you are at school."

The old butler appeared, took my father's coat down from the peg, helped him on with it, and opened the door.

Oh, how cold and dreary it seemed. And the wind, I thought, whistled more shrilly than I had ever heard it whistle before. Twilight was deepening into a thick, gloomy mist, and the boughs of the trees bent down and down, as if they had quite lost heart, but knew that worse still was coming. It would be quite a storm, I reflected, long before papa reached Workington.

Oh, how I wished I might trot along by his side on that dreary walk. I felt that if I had the chance offered me of being safe at home again on condition of my walking all the way to London, I would accept the terms at once, and start joyfully, hatless and cloakless as I was.

I was a faint-hearted little thing, but I loved my home and my father dearly, and I had a strange misgiving that I should never see either again. I was not strong, and I was in the midst of strangers for the first time in my life, and few even of the more robust sex are heroes at seven.

Again papa knelt down and kissed me, and then he crossed the little strip of gravel in front of the house, lifted the latch of

the gate, and was out on the turnpike-road. He turned and waved his hand and smiled. And I tried to smile too, but I could not. My eyes were blinded with tears, and I dashed them frantically aside that I might not miss seeing the last of papa before he came to the wall. And then I heaved a great sob and turned and fled I knew not whither. And I heard the front door close behind me with a bang, and it seemed to shut out all hope. And then I found myself with my face hidden against the goddess's crisp, clean dress and her hand was upon my shoulder, and she said in her gentlest voice, "Come with me into the drawing-room, Cissy, and warm yourself before the fire," for I was as cold as a little frog. And she sat on the hearthrug and rubbed my fingers between the palms of her beautiful hands and gazed into my face with her calm, solemn look of wisdom and benignity, and when I was more composed she said, "You must remain here till bed time and then I will take you upstairs myself." I felt "oh! what a dear good thing you are." But a deadly chill struck to my heart, when, just as she was leading me away and I heard loud chattering and laughter overhead, she said, "Cissy, there is one thing I must tell you. Your papa wishes that while you are here you should be known by a new name. You must not be surprised at hearing yourself called 'Lindhurst.' Try and forget that at home you were called 'Darlington.'" She paused, and then added, "Now you will recollect. What is it I told you your name was?"

"Lindhurst, ma'am."

"Yes, Cissy; and for your papa's sake try and remember that. Not Darlington, mind, but Lindhurst."

## CHAPTER VI.

A CRUSHED hat, a rusty saucepan, battered tin pots, old boots, one dead cat, and a wheel tire.

A strip of ground that will be a road by-and-bye; at present it is an impassable barrier between two blocks of houses in the shell or skeleton stage and built with a special view to rheumatism, ague, and bills for dilapidations.

Oh, such ruts; oh, such gleaming unctuous mud when the wet weather comes; oh, such utter bewilderment when daintily shod young ladies arrive at the brink of the slough and are eagerly desirous, though not at the expense of their *tout ensemble*, to cross from one side of the nascent thoroughfare to the other.

And then the pavement. Every stone in it seems to have a spite against its fellow, and to be elbowing for supremacy,



causing by such unruly conduct, ridges favourable to the increase of puddles, but detrimental to the feet of her Majesty's liege subjects.

And then the smell of the brickfields, not to mention those ill-behaved hobble-de-hoys who hang about amusing themselves with rough horse play and chaffing their betters. Oh ! a terrible district, a mere half-dozen acres of barbarism, and though there are some tall houses in the neighbourhood, the adventurous traders who have settled here as yet do but a poor business.

It is Sunday, and the world in general, and of Eastbourne Grove in particular, has a sunny, but stiff and rather ill-at-ease, appearance. It is making injudicious attempts to look highly superior and even fashionable, and looks more awkward than ever in consequence.

It is wearing shiny coats, ill-fitting and full of creases. Its boots squeak and its gloves, though new, are wrinkled like the face of a septuagenarian.

It is only twenty minutes to eleven, but the sun has power, and the stucco fronts of the houses and the white flagstones, gritty with dust, reflect its rays into the faces of steady churchgoers and reprobate holiday-makers with impartial vindictiveness.

When you have arrived at your destination you will find that your shirt-collar is limp, that beads *will* trickle down your forehead, and that the dye of your black frockcoat emits a sour pungent odour that is not altogether agreeable either to yourself or to your neighbours.

Should you be a sabbath-breaker you will be choked most deservedly by the clouds of dust on the Richmond Road.

Assuming, however, that you are a respectable family man with a proper regard for conventionalities, it is possible that by the time you have settled yourself comfortably in your pew an irritating conviction may have forced itself on your mind that your face would be all the better for a good washing.

Should you be a marriageable young lady with a pardonable idea that you are something more than merely presentable, it is not unlikely that on reaching your destination you may feel hot and flustered, a result due partly to the tightness of those dapper little new boots of yours and partly to those nasty little gusts of wind that popped round the corner, disarranged your front hair and pulled spitefully at your dress as if determined to drag it off your back.

Our own correspondent, and special eye-witness, gifted with the power of rendering himself invisible at will, happens at the present moment to be within the horns of a dilemma. For the last half hour he has been steadily advancing ; but at length he

has come to a standstill. One road branches to the right, the other to the left. Which shall he take? He knows his destination. It is the barbarous landscape which a few graphic touches placed so vividly before the reader at the beginning of this chapter. But as to the further course of his journey he is perplexed. He must consult somebody. He looks eagerly hither and thither. He will question the first person he meets.

As luck will have it a little man with a round good-humoured face, curly black whiskers, and a head of hair like the shading of one of John Gilbert's pictures, comes strutting by, and to him our esteemed friend applies in his difficulty.

"Oh, yes!" answers the little man, "Mr. Awdry Clifford's church. I am going there myself. If you will allow me I will shew you the way. You are fond of sacred music, sir. Our choir is a very strong one. I am entitled to say that though I am a member of it myself. We have a splendid treble; you will hear him this morning, sir, in Spohr's 'As pants the hart.' I dare say you know the piece. It is very much admired by the congregation. We have full choral service every Sunday morning and evening, and the Litany in the afternoon. All the seats are free, and those who come first have the best accommodation. A very excellent plan, don't you think so? Our church is merely a temporary edifice, but it is well supported, and we hope to be able to erect a more substantial building in course of time. I believe Mr. Clifford's exertions have not been viewed with favour by the clergy of the neighbourhood; but it is his success, sir, that has provoked opposition. His church is crammed to suffocation every morning and evening, while one or two others in the district are left comparatively empty. He is a fine preacher, sir; I should recommend you to stay for the sermon. By-the-bye here we are. A very little way from where I met you as you will remember, should you come here again. First to the right, then to the left, then to the right again, then halfway down Moon Street, and there you are. A wretched road indeed, sir, but it is worse in the winter. About Christmas time we had very full congregations, and were obliged to build a sort of bridge. The ladies complained very much, and as there is only one gas lamp that made matters worse."

The little man bows, bids our correspondent a courteous "good morning," and hurries off in the direction of a door marked "School, private."

There is a bell clanging noisily, and a crowd of young men and gaily dressed damsels, most of them in high good humour, press eagerly in through a porch surmounted by a tall wooden cross.

The Church of St. Barabbas-in-the-fields is devoid of architectural pretensions. The windows are not simply rounded or squared off at the top, but pointed, so by a stretch of imagination you may suppose that they are in the early English style. Internally the walls are varnished and decorated with illegible texts in Anglo Saxon characters. The seats are open and of pitched pine. The chancel is approached by three steps, carpeted, and is enclosed by mediæval railings that shake threateningly when any of the choristers lean against them.

The altar is covered by a green velvet cloth embroidered with gold, and surmounted by a cross of unusual size. To the extreme right as you enter stands the organ, an instrument of exceptionally mellow tone and presided over by a gentleman whose skill in playing the overture to "Jessonda" under difficulties is really something wonderful.

It is to be observed that in modern organ playing as in modern travelling, speed is the chief requisite.

Facing the porch is the vestry door, and the swarthy bricklayer who pulls the bell and afterwards marches up the church in a state of profuse perspiration to blow the organ, is stationed immediately under the great west window which is filled with plain ground glass enriched by an orange-coloured border.

The seats fill rapidly, and before the hands of the clock point to eleven there is standing room only, and even the porch is thronged with an eager and curious crowd. Such is its enthusiasm in the course of true religion, that it stands on tip-toe, and in spite of the verger, who tries to shut the door, it insists on craning forwards to view the proceedings about to take place within.

The clanging bell stops at last, and leaves a great buzz in the air behind it, and the bricklayer, with a flushed countenance and damp matted locks, hurries up the side aisle, and disappears behind the curtains of the organ. A deep "Amen," chaunted by full choir, peals from the vestry, one half of the congregation turn their heads round and the other half stand up boldly to have a better view, a melodious and spirited voluntary bursts from the organ, and the Rev. Awdry Clifford is seen advancing up the centre aisle followed by the cross bearer and his choristers two and two. Each of the little boys carries a vase of flowers, and the spectators, especially those in the porch, are much, but not unpleasantly, excited. Some derive satisfaction from the utterance of the monosyllable "Oh!" and then elbow their way to the front and tread on their neighbours' corns with profane obtrusiveness.



The service proceeds; it is full choral. The psalms are recited to a couple of Gregorian chants. The responses are "Ferial," the "Te Deum," and "Jubilate" are Mendelssohn in D, and the anthem is, as the little man with the curly hair prophesied it would be, "As pants the hart," Spohr, and a genuine success.

The Rev. Awdry Clifford is a stoutly built man of the middle height with a square head, a cast of countenance decided and somewhat repellent, dark bottle brush whiskers, a firmly planted jaw, and a mouth with a thick protruding under-lip. He bows profoundly as he passes the altar on his way from the reading desk to the pulpit, crosses himself devoutly, and instead of the usual prayer utters a brief blessing with much unction.

The audience, or the congregation, whichever it may claim to be, settles itself as comfortably as it can on the pitched pine seats, folds its arms or arranges its expansive skirts, and with a placid air of self-satisfaction prepares itself for the weekly instalment of rebuke and denunciation.

The Rev. Mr. Clifford waits judiciously until the church is quite quiet, opens a small Bible that rests at his side, announces the text in a firm, distinct voice, and then repeats it still louder for fear it should have been missed by anyone in a remote part of the premises. This done, he shuts the book, lays it aside deliberately, and remains silent for a few moments as if collecting his thoughts. When he speaks at last it is slowly but clearly, in language so generally intelligible as to be almost homely, and he takes particular pains to explain any allusion that may possibly be obscure to the less literate of his auditors. His voice gains strength and animation as he proceeds.

The earlier part of his speech betokens ability, but is not otherwise remarkable. However it is listened to attentively, apparently under the impression that there are better things to come, and when, after some quarter of an hour's toying with the text, "Charity thinketh no evil," the worthy divine pauses for a moment, and then resumes his discourse in quite an altered tone of voice, all faces are turned eagerly towards the pulpit, and the silence is so profound as to suggest that respectable but rather trite simile of the falling pin.

"My brethren," says the preacher, "it can be no secret to you that my ministrations in this neighbourhood have of late aroused much hostility. I have been denounced, and that in the bitterest terms, by those whom I should have thought glad to welcome any fellow-labourer in the task of disseminating the doctrines of our holy Church. Far be it from me to retaliate, but really it seems as if my principal offence in the eyes of my opponents were the fact of having attracted crowds to this

mean little building, while their own more pretentious edifices remain by the mass of the people deserted. It is all very well to call me an interloper and an impostor, but if any one has a substantial charge to bring against me, let him step boldly forward, and not whisper his suspicions in the dark ; let him confront me in the full hearing of my congregation, aye, if need be, in this very church, that I may have a fair opportunity of rebutting statements that I need make no apology for stigmatizing as calumnies. A baseless accusation, my brethren, is a calumny, from whoever it may proceed, and I challenge any one to meet me here and prove that the statements circulated to my discredit have the least foundation in truth. It is my success that has aroused hostility. After prolonged failure, it is galling to those who scoff at me as an interloper, to find done in a few months that which they themselves have attempted for many years, and in vain. I am told that a rumour has been circulated to the effect that I have never been properly ordained. Let those who originated it prove its truth if they can. It has been thrown in my teeth that I am a Puseyite. Whatever my opinions may be, I have preached the gospel in sincerity and truth ; I have received ample testimony to the value of my ministrations in the crowds that flock to the services held here Sunday after Sunday. It is for you, my brethren, not for those jealous and vindictive false accusers, to express disapprobation of any sentiments I may be supposed to entertain. Had I ever inculcated aught that was offensive, I should have been rebuked long ago, and most properly, by the withdrawal from the church of those who have encouraged me in times past, and from whom I trust in the future to receive the same gratifying measure of support. It has been my aim to celebrate the services of our Liturgy as I conceive they ought to be celebrated, with a degree of warmth and dignity that is wanting in the churches over which those who have been so busy in accusing me, preside—as it seems with such scant success. If ever I have offended just prejudices, or transgressed the bounds of moderation, it is strange indeed that I should never have incurred the remonstrances of any member of my congregation. I may seem, my brethren, to express myself indignantly ; recollect that it is my character which has been called in question. I have been wounded in a point that is dear to every man who knows that he has done his duty to the best of his ability, and who is conscious of purity of motive. I repeat again, I am ready to answer any accusations that may be brought against me openly ; I protest however against the un-English custom of assailing a man in the dark. I have spoken in the plainest language, but with reason. I am no man to plunge into needless discussions that must reflect

more or less discredit on all concerned in them, but I am entitled to defend myself when attacked, the more so when those who assail me are men whom I am not conscious of ever having offended, when they are men, in fact, with whom I would cordially have co-operated in any measure likely to promote the well-being of those committed to their charge, or to aid in the further extension of the doctrines of our holy religion. Nothing more remains for me but to add that if anyone here has lingering doubts, I shall be pleased if he will call at my house, No. 2, Arlington Terrace, where I shall be happy to supply him with any information or testimony that he may judge requisite. It has pained me much, being obliged to allude to a subject purely personal in the house of prayer and thanksgiving, but accusations so widely disseminated seemed to demand in justice to myself, and in justice to those who have countenanced my labours by their generous support, an immediate and public refutation."

Mr. Clifford paused, and his congregation buzzed audibly. Heads bobbed together, and there was many a whisper and many a smile. The worshippers had been on the look-out for a little excitement, and had not been disappointed. They felt that they would stand by their pastor to a man—aye, and what was more, to a woman. Mr. Clifford sipped some water from a tumbler at his side, and in a lower tone of voice added the following statement:

"Sunday next, my brethren, is the Feast of the Dedication. Flowers for the decoration of the church and altar will be thankfully received, either at my private residence, No. 2, Arlington Terrace, or at the school-room adjoining the church. There will be full choral service at 11, at 3 p.m., and at 7. Sermons will be preached in the morning, afternoon, and evening. A choristers rehearsal will take place on Wednesday next at a quarter past six."

And soon after this the crowd of worshippers began to disperse.



## EASY-CHAIR ESSAYS.

## II.—CHERISHED IDENTITY.

PRODIGIOUS, though scarcely recognized, must be the practical importance of the fact, that no man—or next to none—would be another than himself. It must go far indeed to reconcile man to his lot, that he is on such excellent terms with himself. His lot he would often change, perhaps (the dolt !) always would if he could, but himself never, himself *millefois non*. His circumstances he would readily exchange with N. or M., but he fondly cherishes his personal identity. The shoeblack brigade-boy prizes his Ego as devoutly, with a difference, as any Knight of the Garter prizes his ; and your charwoman or cinder-sifter cherishes her identity after the same sort as Queen of Beauty or Queen of a broad realm.

Mrs. Kiddell, in *George Geith*, incidentally refers to what she calls “ that strange sense of personal possession which a man feels in himself, and which makes him know he would rather lie down in the grave in his own flesh and blood than return to life and take another’s proud soul instead.” On another page we have the hero of Fen Court sighing when the woods around Snareham Castle lie spread once more before him. But, “ no, he would not change his own identity, and he would not covet his cousin’s goods. He was content, being himself, to be still a far-off heir, down amongst the rabble, fighting for his life.”

Alike Feltham in his *Resolves*, and Addison in the *Spectator*, have expounded and expanded the celebrated thought of Socrates, that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy, would prefer the share they are already possessed of before that which would fall to them by such a division. Horace, too, is cited by Addison in a passage which carries this thought a great deal farther, and which implies that the hardships or misfortunes we lie under are more easy to us than those of any other person would be, in case we could change conditions with him.

Montaigne contemns the vanity of desiring to be something

else than what we are. The effects of such a desire, he goes on to say, do not touch us, since it is contradicted and nullified in itself: "He that desires to be changed from man into angel does nothing for himself; he would be never the better for it, for being no more, who would there be to rejoice, or even be sensible of the benefit for him?" In Boileau's words, a little wrested from his purpose to ours,—

"Un cœur noble est content de ce qu'il trouve en lui,  
Et ne s'applaudit point des qualités d'autrui."

Dr. Johnson suggests, in his life of Sir Thomas Browne, that perhaps there is no human being, however hid in the crowd from the observation of his fellow-mortals, who, if he has leisure and disposition to recollect his own thoughts and actions, will not conclude his life in some sort a miracle, and imagine himself distinguished from all the rest of his species by many discriminations of nature or of fortune. Nay,

"The tatter'd wretch, who scrapes his idle tunes  
Thro' our dull streets on rainy afternoons;  
The lawless nuisance of the king's highway,  
Houseless and friendless, wander where he may;  
Suspected, spurn'd, unbound by social ties,  
With none to mourn or miss him when he dies;  
Still, to himself, that vagrant man appears  
The central object of revolving spheres."

Commenting on the contentment of the great mass of the suffering world, the author of the *Chronicles of Clovernook* points to some poor souls doomed to coal-pits, some to arsenic mines, some to dig in misery and darkness, so many to toil and toil and hunger and hunger—to whom every day is but the wretched repetition of the past, and yet of whom, with all this certain evil grinding and crushing them, very few would consent to draw their lot again, if Destiny were to hold forth her human lucky-bag, to give them another chance. "No, no," says the Hottentot, with a proud downward look at his girdle of sheep-gut—"no, no, I don't draw again; for who knows, I might come up a Dutch boor." "No lucky-bag for me," cries the Esquimaux; "I might lose my delicious whale-blubber, and turning up an Englishman, be doomed to beef and porter." "Much obliged to you," says the poor idiot, with a *goître* at his throat as big as a foot-ball,— "I hear there are such folks as Patagonians; straight-limbed fellows, seven feet high; no lucky-bag for me—I might be one of them." To the like effect run Goldsmith's lines on where to find the happiest spot below, which who can direct, when all pretend to know?

“The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone  
 Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own,  
 Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,  
 And his long night of revelry and ease:  
 The naked negro, panting at the line,  
 Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,  
 Basks in the glare, or stems the rapid wave,  
 And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.”

How about looks? Peter Pindar’s ode to his Ass, and namesake Peter, assures that animal that “Lady Mount,” whom Queen Charlotte was “always happy to have by her side, as being one of the ugliest women in England,”—her Majesty’s fine foil, in short—would very willingly change faces with him, Peter, (never mind which Peter, either will do). In Dryden’s *Wife of Bath’s Tale* we read of crones, old and ugly, who wished for a better face. Rosalind, in *As you Like It*, twits Jaques with being one of those sour fribbles who not only “disable,” that is to say disparage, all the benefits of their own country, and are out of love with their nativity; but, she adds, “almost chide God for making you that countenance you are.” But Shakespeare might be spokesman for a larger constituency when he wrote in the sonnets,

“Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,  
 No shape so true.”

And what says Glorious John in the prologue to *King Arthur*? “An ape his own dear image will embrace; an ugly bear adores a hatchet face.” Dr. Wolcot puts the question, nor pauses for a reply, “Who likes a pigmy that a giant moves? Again, what pigmy with a form of lath, lost in his shadow, likes the man of Gath?”

“The burly hostess, for a cart-horse fit,  
 Scorns Daphne’s reed-like shape, and calls her *chit*,  
 While on the rough robustious lump of nature,  
 Contemtuously Daphne whispers, ‘What a creature!’”

Lord Cockburn, after telling us that John Leyden—who, had he been spared, might have been a star in the east of the first magnitude—was a wild-looking, meagre man, with sandy hair, a screech voice, and staring eyes; adds, that “not one of these not very attractive personal qualities would he have exchanged for all the graces of Apollo.” Not a line upon his face that he would wish to blot.

As regards good looks, and the reverse, that is an instructive passage in which Marivaux—*observateur précieux*—examines a number of ill-favoured folks who are just as complacently coquettish as their betters in beauty. Closely he scrutinizes the



meaning of a file of faces, male and female, and all more or less ugly ; and he tries to make out that some at least among them express patience with their facial fortune, and an air of resignation, as if to make the best of the hard lines on their countenances ; but no, one and all obviously prefer the looks they severally have : “ *Je n’en découvris pas un dont la contenance ne me dît : Je m’y tiens.*”

Whatever, as Pope says, the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,

“ Not one will change his neighbour with himself,  
The learn’d is happy nature to explore,  
The fool is happy that he knows no more ;  
The rich is happy in the plenty given,  
The poor contents him with the care of Heaven.”

Swift argues in one of his sermons that men are, demonstrably, in their own judgment, not so unequally dealt with as they would at first sight imagine ; for if I would not exchange my condition with another man without any exception or reservation at all, I am, on my own showing, happier than he. Now, though nothing may be more frequent than for a man to wish himself in another’s condition, yet is the wish seldom without reserve ; he would not be so old, or so sickly, or so vicious, or so ugly, &c. So fine old Sir Thomas Browne, says, that wish though we may, and do, for the “ prosperous appurtenances of others,” or to be another in his happy accidents, “ yet so intrinsical is every man unto himself, that some doubt may be made, whether any would exchange his being, or substantially become another man.” Men are not always, nor often, contented with their lot, observes one of the interlocutors in Gravenhurst, but they are always contented with themselves. They cannot wish to *be* another man ; they may wish to add to their own possessions another’s wealth or another’s knowledge ; but they “ rest in their own individuality.” Shakespeare’s outcast may look upon himself and curse his fate,

“ Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
Desiring this man’s art, and that man’s scope ;”

but though, as one of the Headlong Hall philosophers puts it, every man, without exception, would willingly effect a very material change in his relative situation to other individuals, no man whatever would resign his identity, which is nothing more than the consciousness of his perceptions, as the price of any acquisition. Hazlitt affirms, in an essay on the love of life, that simply to *be* does not content man’s natural desire ; we long to be in a certain time, place, and position ; that our attachment is not

confined either to being or to well-being, but that we have an inveterate prejudice in favour of our immediate existence, such as it is. The mountaineer, he goes on to say, will not leave his rock, nor the savage his hut; neither are we willing to give up our present mode of life, with all its advantages and disadvantages, for any other that could be substituted for it. "No man, I think, would exchange his existence with any other man, however fortunate. We had as lief *not be*, as *not be ourselves*." Even Byron's Manfred meets the chamois hunter's query, "And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot for mine?" with a direct negative: "No friend,—nor exchange my lot with living being: I can bear in life what others could not brook to dream, but perish in their slumber." And yet the mountaineer only spoke of changing lots. Hazlitt himself would have eagerly changed lots with many a contemporary; and in one of his autobiographical memoranda he confesses to a heterodox bias even in respect of the cherished article of personal identity. At one time, he says, he was so devoted to Rembrandt, that if the Prince of Darkness had made him the offer in some vast wood he should have been tempted to close with it, and so to *become*, in happy hour and downright earnest, the great master of light and shade. Schleiermacher, in one of his letters, records the soft self-impeachment, "If I ever find myself sportively indulging in an impossible wish, it is, that I were a woman." Lord Lytton's Harley L'Estrange professes to be so tired of himself, having run through all his ideas, and knowing them all by heart, that he longs to become somebody else; if he could be your hall porter, now, or one of your eminent matter-of-fact men, he should then really travel into a new world. One of Alfred de Musset's comedies ventilates the same airy whim. But a lien upon personal identity is assumed in all such cases of optional hypothesis. Not to lose hold of the endeared ego, but to super-add new sensations, novel impressions, fresh consciousness, is the wisher's aim.

One may apply to the subject a fragment of colloquy between Helen and Millicent in Acton Bell's story of Wildfell Hall. The latter lady professes to "speak the solemn truth in saying that I would not exchange my husband for any man on earth, if I might do it by the plucking of this leaf." "Well, I believe you," is Helen's reply; "now that you have him, you would not exchange him for another; but then you would gladly exchange some of his qualities for those of better men." So with our personal identity, now that we have it. Mr. Browning touches, in his suggestive way, on the metaphysics of the question, in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*:

"Thus much conceded, still the first fact stays—  
 You do despise me ; your ideal of life  
 Is not the bishop's—you would not be I—  
 You would like better to be Goethe, now,  
 Or Buonaparte—or, bless you, lower still,  
 Count D'Orsay,—so you did what you preferred,  
 Spoke as you thought, and as you cannot help,  
 Believed or disbelieved, no matter what,  
 So long as on that point, whate'er it was,  
 You loosed your mind, were whole and sole yourself."

When we cannot be quite as happy as others, says Henry Mackenzie, our pride naturally balances the account ; it shows us that we are wiser. In Pope's setting of the same truism, we see some strange comfort every stake attend, and pride bestowed on all, a common friend.

Writers by the hundred have amused themselves, if not their readers, with fancying the bird, beast, fish, flower, or inorganic substance with which it would be pleasant to exchange lots. Shaftesbury expatiates on the advantages enjoyed by many of the "wild creatures" over "feeble man"—their being proof against the injuries of season and weather, their living in careless ease, their more helpful infancy, their more vigorous age, their quicker senses, their superior natural sagacity, etc. Gryllus, in Plutarch's dialogue, maintains against Ulysses the greater happiness of the brute life than the life of man,—and in answer to Circe's offer, prefers, with his companions, to remain as they are, swine. More humanely intelligible is the sort of envy one of Mr. Hawthorne's artists avows for the lot of his mythic Faun, exclaiming how happy, how genial, how satisfactory would be such a life, enjoying the warm, sensuous, earthy side of nature ; revelling in the merri-ment of woods and streams ; "living as our four-footed kindred do—as mankind did in its innocent childhood : before sin, sorrow, or mortality itself had ever been thought of. Ah ! Kenyon, if Hilda, and you, and I—if I, at least—had pointed ears ! For I suppose the Faun had no conscience, no remorse, no burden on the heart, no troublesome recollections of any sort ; no dark future either." Dr. O. W. Holmes supposes the boldest thinker to have moments when he would fain drop all coherent thought, and lie in the flowery meadow with the brown-eyed solemnly unthinking cattle ; if he could be like these, he would be content to be driven home by the cow-boy, share the grassy banquet of King Nebuchadnezzar. So Allan Armadale, as Midwinter takes his arm, and leads him back to the house, looks round with rueful eyes at the cattle hard by, placidly whisking their tails in the pleasant shade, and "Don't mention it in the neighbourhood," he



says; "I should like to change places with one of my own cows." Practically undreamt-of in his philosophy is that of Martial, *Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis*.

Burns said there were just two creatures he envied—a horse in his wild state traversing the forest of Asia, and an oyster on some of the desert shores of Europe; because the one has not a wish without enjoyment—the other has (but how could Burns tell?) neither wish nor fear. It was in dudgeon that the ploughman poet thus expressed himself—when the black fit was on him, as it was on Colonel Gardiner when he used to exclaim, "Oh, that I were that dog!" So Sir Kenneth, in Scott's *Talisman*, over his slain hound: "I would that, dying as he is, I could exchange conditions with that noble animal!" How different in spirit, and to the letter, the aspiration of the misanthrope in Smollett: "Would I were a worm,—or rather a wasp or a viper, that I might make the rascally world feel my resentment!" Or Miss Gwilt's "I wish I had been born an animal. My beauty might have been of some use to me then—it might have got me a good master." Peter Pindar's ode to the eight cats of Israel Mendez closes with the *utinam*, "How much I wish that I were one of you!" Peter delighted in these vagrant volitions; sometimes putting them into the mouths of other people, as where he makes a noble lord exclaim,

"Happy, happy, happy fly!  
Were I you, and you were I!"

sometimes shaping one for himself, as in the address to an owl:

"Thou solemn bird on yonder ivied tower,  
Wilt thou exchange thy nature, Owl, with me?  
Happy to take possession of thy bower,  
I here protest I would exchange with thee."

Naturally the winged creation comes in for a large proportion of envious wishes. Who, in Keble's words, who but would follow, might he break his chain? Wordsworth sets his little daughter a thinking which bird she would rather be, a pet parrot, or the shy wren in yonder moss-lined shed:

"Say, Dora! tell me, by yon placid moon,  
If called to choose between the favoured pair,  
Which would you be, the bird of the saloon,  
By lady-fingers tended with nice care,  
Caressed, applauded, upon dainties fed,  
Or Nature's darkling of this mossy shed?"

George Herbert, in his pietistic poetics, would be, if not a bird, then a tree, for sure then he should grow to fruit or shade;

at least some bird would trust her household to him. And elsewhere he specifies what tree he aspires to become :

“Oh, that I were an orange-tree,  
That busy plant!  
Then should I ever laden be,  
And never want  
Some fruit for him that dresseth me.”

From the mystic musings of holy George Herbert what a change to Thersites with his “To be a dog, a mule, a cat, a fitchew, a toad, a lizard, an owl, a puttock, or a herring without a roe, I would not care; but to be Menelaus,—I would conspire against destiny. Ask me not what I would be, if I were not Thersites,” &c.,—for &c. will best supply or suggest what remains; an eligible instance of *et cætera desunt*. Thersites has his fellow in another play; and the Apemantus of *Timon of Athens*, who would fain be a beast with the beasts, is duly lashed for the avowal by the man-hating but not therefore beast-loving Timon. What beast could he be, asks the latter, without suffering from some other one; and what a beast was he already, not to see his loss in transformation!

## CONSTANCE.

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“*Velut ægri somnia.*”—HORACE.

I HAD—perchance I still may have—a friend.  
 Her name—we'll call it Constance : she to me,  
 For four long years,—nay, rather brief, not long,—  
 Was sharer of my thoughts, my hopes, my fears,  
 In matters where the Muse doth dominate ;  
 And every day, and week, and month, and year,  
 My wonder grew to see how leal and sage  
 And true was all she thought and did and said.  
 She shone a perfect woman in mine eyes,  
 Judged e'en by highest standard ; my regard  
 For her grew more and more ; tender respect  
 And manly sympathy in this world's woes—  
 (Woes that had thrown a sobering halo round  
 Her inmost being, and had well-nigh crushed  
 Her heart of hearts)—was all I had to give.  
 And this I gave her freely. And she said  
 That to my manly sympathy she owed  
 All that is priceless in this lower world,  
 Reason and hope ; and I had wept with her  
 Beside her mother's death-bed, and had sworn  
 That come what might of sorrow, pain, or grief,  
 I would be her true friend.

I never thought

To steer my bark upon the Tropic seas  
 Of Love, so full of storm and sudden squall,  
 But in serener Friendship's temperate waves  
 To sail secure ; and then, methought, the while  
 Tempests would ne'er arise, no thunder-cloud  
 Would overcast the bright pure heav'n above—  
 That heaven her presence was to me.



Yes, so I thought, I dreamed. And months rolled by;  
 And at her home a constant honoured guest  
 (More honoured than I ever sought to be),  
 I sate beside her, and securely sate,  
 And watched her as from month to month she grew  
 Willing to visit those glad scenes again  
 Where once she shone the "fairest of the fair."  
 And then when tidings, well-nigh worse than death,  
 Came from a far-off land, how her son,  
 Her well-loved son, had prospered but amiss,  
 Fain would I have gone forth and sought and found  
 The wand'rer, and have brought him back, and said,  
 "See here, thou mother dear, thy long lost son."  
 And oh! had word of slight or scorn been said  
 Of him or her, how would my soul have fired!  
 How had I burned to vindicate the wrong!

Yes! friendship is a sacred, holy thing,  
 Akin to love, and yet divergent far.  
 There can be friendship where no love may be;  
 And friendship can do all that love can do,  
 And often more besides. And when it bleeds  
 It pours as red and rich a stream from out  
 Its side as love doth from the inmost heart.

"Well; and this friendship lasted?"

Many a month;  
 Then months went on to years; and yet it seemed  
 Our friendship grew more sacred than before,  
 Though it knew nought of love—of earthly love.  
 But it did more; it helped to raise me far  
 Above my base self—taught me, as I strove  
 To make me worthy of it, to aspire  
 To higher, nobler, more unselfish ways;  
 And I would put my grosser interests by,  
 And school my mind to take no thought of *self*,  
 If only I could minister to *her*.  
 All that was hers, moreover, soon became  
 Thrice dear to me; her very children's face  
 Remembered me of all the mother was.  
 Her looks were treasured in mine inmost soul;  
 Her thoughts, transmuted, passed into my thoughts.  
 In her I lived, and on her voice I hung,—  
 That voice that to my ear was music sweet.  
 The very rustling of her silken robe  
 Struck on my ear with no unheeded sound;

And when she spoke and greeted my approach,  
 She seemed to say, "Whatever may betide  
 "Elsewhere, at least in me you read a friend,  
 "And friendly welcome ever waits you here."

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"Well, and what then? Say did this friendship last?  
 "And doth it prove abiding? Spring returns  
 "And passes into summer. But the sun,  
 "The summer solstice past, sinks slowly down,  
 "And winter's frosts come back."

I know it, friend ;

And fool I was to deem my lot was free  
 From mortal change and sharp vicissitude.  
 For, when my sun shone brightest, and the sky  
 Was bluest and serenest in its depths,  
 No bigger than a human hand, one cloud,  
 One little cloud, upon th' horizon seen  
 First indistinctly, lowered, and lowering grew,  
 Till it obscured my heaven. Then all grew dark  
 And dizzy round my head ; I swooned and sunk  
 Fainting and prostrate on th' unpitying ground.  
 Then earth and earthly things or passed away  
 Or seemed to pass ; the sunless atmosphere  
 Chilled the dull life-blood in mine inmost veins ;  
 I passed into oblivion : day by day  
 I lay upon the ground or on my couch  
 Half wond'ring, half oblivious. Sleepless nights  
 And days of slumber passed upon my brain,  
 My giddy brain ; and oft and oft I prayed  
 In mercy God would take me to Himself,  
 Nor lengthen out th' unwelcome boon of life.  
 And when at last I slept, I dreamed a dream.  
 (Was it a dream?)—I wandered by the brink  
 Of silvery Thames, and a kind eye looked down  
 Upon me, such as once was Constance's ;  
 And then it grew so solemn, stern, and fierce,  
 I fled affrighted ; and I know no more,  
 Save that I thought I heard a gurgling noise  
 Of waters round me, and beheld the blue  
 And bright ethereal depths beneath the stream  
 Of that swift river as it glided by,  
 And woke in other worlds—a suicide.

My sleep it passed, and with it fled my dream :  
 And then I knew what narrow bound had stood  
 Betwixt me and my madness.

——— “And for why  
 “This hair-breadth ’scape ? this sad foretaste of woe ?”

I know not, and I cannot yet divine.  
 I served her faithfully, and Constance knows  
 I served her faithfully, sought not mine own,  
 Thought not mine own, nor ever strove to climb  
 The lofty “pedestal” on which she loved  
 To place her objects of idolatry—  
 That pedestal from which, the loftier  
 It rises to the sky, the fall is worse,  
 And nearer far to fatal. I perchance  
 Did falsify her high-wrought hopes of me.  
 Sooth I was never made a Belvedere,  
 To stand upon a pedestal, beheld  
 Of all beholders ; and I shrink the gaze  
 Of those who upward look to me. A place  
 More humble and more lowly far be mine.  
 But this I know ; God be my witness here !  
 I never thought to wrong her, and I ne’er  
 Wrong’d her by scornful thought, or word, or deed.  
 I would have laid my life down on the sand,  
 And sacrificed my veriest hope of heaven,  
 To light the load of her enduring grief.  
 And I would do so now. Though storms have ris’n  
 To overcloud the brightness of my sky,  
 Yet ready am I once again, renewed  
 In health, and strength, and life, to vow myself  
 Her manly, tender, sympathetic friend.  
 Her name is “Constance.” I will ne’er believe  
 That she can have forsworn that virtue which  
 Her name remembers. Oh ! that she would say,  
 As once she said, “Dear friend, I look for you ;  
 “Will greet your advent as I used to greet.  
 “Come to the old familiar haunts, and talk  
 “The old familiar talk to willing ears ;  
 “Think the old thoughts, and dwell upon the themes  
 “That once were not distasteful. See where stands  
 “Vacant the chair in which you wont to sit  
 “In my sad days of weary desolateness.  
 “Think of the past no more. If clouds arose,  
 “(As thou dost say) upon thy summer sky,  
 “I saw them not ; nor did I raise the storm.  
 “I would not willingly fling back in scorn  
 “A manly heart’s true friendship. Come, and be



“ As once we were, true and familiar friends.  
“ The tiny minever who scorns to taint  
“ His fair white fleece with stain of dirt or filth  
“ Bears not a skin more void of all reproach  
“ Than thou in all that thou hast done towards me.  
“ Thou may'st have erred ; that thou wilt freely own ;  
“ Error is human, and thou art but man.  
“ Forgiveness is the woman's noblest part :  
“ 'Tis hers and highest Heaven's. Then come, nor fear  
“ One dark suspicion or reproachful word.  
“ The old familiar friendship yet shall be  
“ The still familiar friendship. Life's sad bane,  
“ Pride, only pride, I know, doth keep thee back.”

Oh ! could she say these words, then swift as thought  
Once more I would return. Estrangement then  
Should find no place ; all should be perfect peace.  
Life is too sad, life is too short, for strife ;  
Peace only is eternal. But perchance  
All this is but a dream ; for mortal life  
Is made of shadows, not of substances.  
And if life's self be nothing but a dream,  
Must not our petty strifes, our puny cares,  
Our selfish interests, and our fancied wrongs—  
As e'er the greater doth include the less—  
Be after all but “ as a sick man's dreams ?”



HALF AFRAID.





## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

### CHAPTER IX.

#### BOHEMIA.

THE manager's room in the *Sentinel* office—a plain apartment, the chief characteristic of which is the all-pervading smell of tobacco smoke. Mr. Brown seated at a desk is glancing over the morning's letters, talking the while to Gerald, who is sitting opposite to him smoking.

"I haven't asked you your name, and I don't want to know it. Some day when you know me better than you do now, I dare say you will tell me what it is of your own free will. Until then you are Mr. Dangerfield to me and to my friends; so that's all right!"

Tom struck his broad chest with his broad hand as he uttered these words, and looked round him with an air of intense satisfaction.

"You said you wanted work last night: do you still want it, Mr. Dangerfield?" he continued.

"I must get work, or I must starve."

"Well, there's plenty of work to be had in this world. Lazy people, and stupid people, and vicious people would try to make you believe the contrary; but it's all their own fault. That's my experience at any rate. Now, what would you like to be?"

Gerald was puzzled. He had been trying every orthodox and genteel method of obtaining employment for months past, and all his efforts had been in vain. Yet here was a man who spoke as though he could command for him any post which he chose to mention.

"I really don't know, Mr. Brown, what particular kind of work I should like. I'm afraid I am not fit for much. I should be glad of anything by which I could earn a living—honestly and honourably of course."

"By Jove! Dangerfield, you did well to add that proviso to your speech; but I'm afraid you've limited the field of your search by doing so. Do you know that of all the men you met last night at the 'Duke's Head,' I don't believe two are getting

their living either honestly or honourably, whilst some who haven't your scruples, aren't getting a living at all."

"Do you really mean it, Mr. Brown?" said Gerald, in astonishment. "Why, do you know, I was quite pleased with them, and thought I had never met such an honest and pleasant set of fellows in my life. But pardon me, if they are what you say, I am surprised that you should associate with them."

"Me!" cried Tom, once more smiting his mighty chest with the action which was habitual to him, "and who am I, sir, that I should pretend to be better than my neighbours? I'm a Pharisee, sir, and a Philistine into the bargain; and as contemptible a rogue and vagabond as ye ever met with. I'm the profligate and abandoned father of seven children, and the husband of one wife who has every reason to hate me. Don't think anything good of me, my dear fellow, for if you do you'll some day discover your mistake. *Me* virtuous! *Me* give up my cakes and ale! By the Lord, no." And once more Mr. Tom Brown emphasized his words by a ringing blow upon his chest.

Gerald was shrewd enough to accept this confession at its true value. He looked up at Brown with a smile, and said:

"I don't pretend to much virtue myself; and I'm afraid that if I did I should soon be known to be a mere pretender."

"That's right, my boy; that's right. Touch not the unclean thing; that is to say, pretend not to a virtue which thou hast not got. It's the pretence of virtue which is of all unclean things at the present day at once the uncleanest and the commonest. Cast it away from you, sir, and be like me—a Pharisee."

Gerald laughed outright at this queer ending to Brown's speech. Then the latter, lighting a cigar, turned from his desk and said:

"You would like to know about the men you saw last night, and I suppose you are curious as to my meaning when I hinted that their mode of gaining a living was not in every case either honest or honourable. Well, sir, here goes for a sketch of them. Three of them, Barrett, Macgregor, and little Tom Brown—no relation of mine, thank heaven! though a namesake—are parliamentary reporters and London correspondents. Confirmed liars and slanderers all of them, sir! Can you imagine any mode of getting a living more dishonourable than by perpetuating the twaddle which the noodles of the House of Commons talk; or anything more utterly disgraceful than making money by retailing the scandal which is to be picked up in the gutters of Fleet Street for the benefit of Little Peddlington and Cotton-cum-Barley? They're fine fellows, are Barrett, and Mac, and little Tom; but for all that, sir, I dare not affirm that their mode of gaining a living

is either honest or honourable. Then there's Billy Stubbles! A good man and true, is William Stubbles, Esquire, of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, or at any rate he would be, if he would keep clear of whiskey and ladies. But how do you think he lives? Why, sir, though Billy Stubbles is without exception less of a saint than any man of my acquaintance, his principal source of emolument is an annuity he gets from an old parson down in Leicestershire, who knew his father, and who employs him to write a sermon a week for him. And wonderfully good sermons they are, if you'll believe me. Billy has at his command a larger quantity of virtuous sentiment than any other man I ever met with. The more's the pity that he keeps it all for the benefit of the parson in Leicestershire. Jack Gradwell, the fat man, you will remember, who sat in the chimney corner, earns a disgraceful livelihood by writing 'penny numbers.' Don't know what they are? Have you never seen in the news shops in Fetter Lane, those thrilling productions called 'the Merry Sons of Satan' and 'the Prince and the Peasant?' Jack writes them both, sir, and gets five pounds a week for the two. The only stipulation made by his employers is that each number should contain one well-authenticated case of murder, adultery, or abduction. Call you that an honourable or honest mode of living? Then there's Bob Radley, who writes leaders for the *Sentinel*. And if it's either honest or honourable to write the worst leaders which could be got anywhere for the money, why then, sir, call Tom Brown no true man! And there's Tom himself. I'd nearly forgotten him, though he is without doubt the worst of the lot. Tom gets his living here"—and Brown looked round the dingy little room with beaming face—"and gets it by keeping the most worthless set of vagabonds to write for, and publish the most disreputable newspaper in London. And now, sir, what do you think of the company in which you were last night?" This last sentence, with a knowing smile, as who should say. "For once in your life, young gentleman, you've heard the truth about your acquaintances, and you don't like it."

Our hero, however, met Tom's smile with another as honest and as open. "I am rather astonished at some of the things you have told me about your friends, but I confess I don't think the worse of them for the description you have given me. I know that the *Sentinel* is very far indeed from being 'the most disreputable newspaper in London,' and I suppose therefore that your other statements must be taken with an equal amount of reserve. But you haven't told me anything about Mr. Redwood, the gentleman with whom I had such a long conversation last night."



"Ah! you have me there," replied Brown. "Charlie Redwood was the only honest man amongst us, barring yourself. Like yourself, too, sir, Charlie comes of a good stock, and is not quite so much at home as he might be amongst the Gradwells, and Stubbleses, and Barretts. All the same, and in spite of his connection with a county family, and no end of swells, he has a strong leaning towards Bohemianism, and would like nothing better than to be getting his living by his pen. But there, bless you! The fates have been kinder to him, and have made a mining engineer of him, instead of a reporter or a London correspondent."

"A mining engineer," inquired Gerald. "What is that?"

"A mining engineer, Dangerfield, is, to explain the phrase concisely, an engineer who has charge of mines; and the particular mines of which Charlie has charge, are coal mines in Northumberland. He makes a great deal more by that kind of work than he would ever make by his pen, clever though he is, for I should think his income is nearer three than two thousand a-year, even now; and if all I've heard about these mining engineers be true, it may be twenty thousand before he dies."

Gerald had at first listened with a somewhat languid interest to Brown's explanation respecting Redwood, but when he heard him mention the last figure he started, and felt as though sudden light were thrown upon his path. His whole hope in life, all for which he now lived, was to become rich—rich enough to avenge himself upon his cousin. As a poor man he must always be powerless, but if the way to wealth could be opened to him, he would tread it with patience and perseverance, no matter what the difficulties which might beset him, in the hope of at last gaining that influence which the possession of money gives. The lessons of the last few months had not been lost upon him. He knew, by bitter experience, how weak and insignificant he was as a poor man, and before all things he felt that he must gain wealth. He must gain it, too, by the labour of his head and his hands, and as he heard Brown giving this information about Redwood, it seemed to him that he had found the occupation which would lead him to the end he had in view.

"Mr. Brown," he ventured to say after a pause, "If you will permit me, I'll tell you what I have not told to any other living creature. I want advice—you can't know how sorely—and I should like to have your advice if you will favour me with it."

"I shall be very happy," said Brown.

"You will smile when I tell you, that the whole object of my life is to get money. I dare say you will think that it is the object of a great many other persons as well. So it is. But in my case

there are better reasons than there generally are for my setting this before me as the great end of my life. I told you my father had been a rich man, and had died suddenly, ruined by the fall of a swindling company. I did not tell you how rich he was, and what was the place he occupied in society, nor can I do so now. But ever since his death I have had but one sacred purpose in life before me, and it is to secure the fulfilment of that purpose that I need money—not a little money; not the mere wages of a clerk; but great sums of money, such—such as that which you mentioned just now in speaking of Redwood. Will you help me? Will you show me how money may be got?”

“My dear fellow, I haven’t the secret of the philosopher’s stone, and I’m not prepared to join you in robbing the Bank of England—though I dare say I’m capable of that, if I thought there were any chance of my being successful. Work I can give you, but wealth I have not myself, and I have it not, therefore, to bestow upon others.”

There was something dignified in Brown’s manner which showed him in a new light to our hero as he spoke.

“But you spoke just now, Mr. Brown, of the income which Mr. Redwood was making as a mining engineer, and you hinted at the possibility of his making much more. What I want to know is whether there is any chance of my becoming an engineer, and if so, whether I should be as likely to succeed as Mr. Redwood?”

“Ah! there you’ve put a ‘poser’ to me. We must ask Redwood what he thinks about that, and as good luck would have it, he is coming to see me this morning. And now let us have something to drink—it’s dry work talking.”

Brown sallied forth to a quiet bar in the neighbourhood, where he was soon engaged in the consumption of sundry glasses of whiskey, Gerald in the meantime contenting himself with a glass of sherry, rather thick and sweet. Everybody seemed to know Brown: the young lady with the corkscrew ringlets and the unfading simper behind the bar; the elderly toper who, early as the hour was, had already succeeded in drinking more than was good for him; and the medley of business men, actors, journalists, and idlers who came in for their sherry and bitters, were all at home with him. Mr. Brown, it was evident, was one of the characters of Fleet Street, and Gerald watched him with all the curiosity with which the young observe that which is entirely new to them.

Presently Redwood arrived, and then the three returned to the *Sentinel* office, where Brown opened the conversation by asking the engineer, without preface of any sort, whether he could take Dangerfield into partnership with him.

My story would lag if I were to dwell upon all that followed.

Redwood, cynical and critical as he had been last night, was charming to-day. He was almost as agreeable a companion as Sir Arthur Lumley himself; whilst Gerald thought he could detect the ring of true metal under his new friend's merry laugh. The absence of that coldness and reserve which distinguish those who regard themselves as the better-bred members of society in their intercourse with strangers, was almost startling to our hero. He could not believe that he had only known these two men for four-and-twenty hours, for he found himself talking with them more freely and familiarly than he used to do after years of acquaintance with his father's aristocratic friends. Bohemia, you observe, good reader, though it is doubtless a country in which you would scorn knowingly to set your foot, is after all a very pleasant place, and its inhabitants, even if they have not the graces which adorn good society, are not altogether destitute of those qualities which find favour with frail and unsophisticated human nature.

It was in Bohemia, in the very heart of it, that Gerald now found himself. Tom Brown was a king in the merry country, and a king whose virtues I am but too well pleased to be allowed to celebrate. Even Redwood, though his home was in far-away Northumberland, and his profession was not one which the Bohemian usually affects, had the dash of wild blood in his veins which every true Bohemian has. He was never so happy as when he could pay a hurried visit to town, and mingle with "the set" amongst whom we have seen him; never so thoroughly at home as in the upper room at the "Duke's Head," listening to the queer random talk of his companions, and uttering at long intervals those sharp sarcasms by which he had made himself famous in Bohemia. In his own county he was a man of good position, of considerable wealth, and of the most unblemished respectability. In London, that is to say in Bohemian London, he was—I blush to say it—a vagabond, consorting with those who were still greater vagabonds than himself.

Vagabond as he was, he took to Gerald—possibly because he detected the elements of vagabondage in the lad himself. He drew from him more of his story than even Brown's blunt questionings had been able to elicit. He was manifestly interested in what he heard, and that evening Gerald dined with him by appointment at his hotel, which, strange to say, was as far from Bohemia as Jermyn Street. There, finding himself amongst the scenes to which he had been accustomed in his brighter days, Gerald would have relapsed into the reserve from which he had been drawn by Brown, if it had not been for Redwood's tact, and for the genuine kindness which he displayed. Bit-by-bit, he drew the lad's whole story from him, until at last he knew all that



Gerald knew, and was aware that he was speaking to that unfortunate son of the unfortunate Sir George Lumley, with whose sad case the newspapers a few months before had been ringing.

"Ah! I know your story now, Mr. Lumley; and a harder one I never heard," said Redwood, when the tale was ended.

"God knows it's a hard one. I sometimes wonder how I have borne it all."

"I wonder too. But you say you want work—will you let me help you?"

"Thank you." I told you this morning that I should only be too glad if you could show me how I could gain a footing in the same profession as yourself. You know why I want to be rich. I must reap my vengeance." Gerald's eyes blazed with fierce passion as he uttered these words.

"You must not be too severe upon your cousin," said Redwood soothingly. "After all, though I can't help thinking that he behaved abominably in the offer he made to you, it was the law which gave him the title and estates."

"But I haven't told you all! I can't tell you all! He has robbed me of more than name and money; and when the day of vengeance comes let him take care of himself!"

Redwood eyed Gerald closely, and then said, with the cynical coolness which he had displayed at the "Duke's Head" on the previous evening—

"Excuse me—when the day of vengeance comes you will think better of it. You may take my word for that. But now to business. You want to be a mining engineer. Well, I can make you one."

Gerald interrupted him with an exclamation of gratitude.

"Stop," said the other, "I can make a mining engineer of you; but you must not suppose that I can make you a rich man. I can ensure a livelihood to you, after you have learned the secrets of my profession, but anything else must rest with yourself. If you will come down to Northumberland with me to-morrow, I will gladly instal you at once as one of my pupils."

He did not say that he usually received a heavy fee with a pupil, and Gerald was not aware of the fact.

"It will take a long time for you to become such a master of engineering as to be able to take a viewer's place at a colliery; but in the meantime, whilst you are learning, if you don't object to work for me, I can give you a salary large enough for you to live upon."

So the bargain was struck, and thus suddenly Gerald Lumley found himself on the threshold of that life of labour which is the

lot of most of us, and which, however small may be its commencement, may have a strangely eventful ending. His heart rose at the thought of beginning to work, for work was the only means by which he could advance the great object of his life, and it was, moreover, the greatest relief from his own sorrows which was open to him. It was with a lighter heart, therefore, than he had carried for months that he wended his way to his lodgings that afternoon. He had fallen from his high estate. He could no longer consort with the rich and the great. He could hardly hope now that the woman he loved could ever be his. But he seemed suddenly to have found new friends, and to have had a new life opened to him, and, compared to the misery through which he had been passing, that life seemed full of brightness. Youth, and hope which always lives with youth, were beginning to do their work upon Gerald, and he was realizing the fact that, however sore may be the sorrows which afflict the soul, there is still work for the brave heart to do, and pleasures and rewards waiting to be reaped by it.

"If you please, sir, you're the gentleman as I was to wait and see, sir. And please, sir, will you come directly, sir, for mother says she's sure to die before night; and she wants you awful bad, sir?"

A ragged, unkempt girl, a mere baby, was the speaker, and it was Gerald whom she addressed at the door of his lodgings. She had been waiting there for hours for him; and was sorely wearied and worn out, poor child; but, with the persistency of her class, had remained at her post to deliver the message with which she was charged.

"Who is it that is dying, and where am I to go?" inquired Gerald.

"Please, sir, it's Nell wots dying. She used to live wi' us last winter, and she come yesterday, all white and wore away like, and mother's let her sleep wi' us, and the doctor's been to see her, and says she can't get better."

Our hero remembered his companion during many of his dreary vigils in Hyde Park, the girl who had so often confided her story to him, and he hastened with the little messenger in the direction which she indicated. She led him to a house in a dismal blind alley in one of the lowest quarters of Westminster; and here, in a miserably furnished room, he found the unhappy girl he had met in the park, propped up upon a bed of rags and dying fast.

On all God's earth there are hardly creatures who have fallen lower than the women of the London parks. Take it, for all in all, their life is more hopeless and more wretched than that of

any savage whose lot the traveller has yet discovered. Oh ! ladies of the world of fashion : you who are to be seen every evening in the season sunning yourselves in those matchless equipages which are the pride of Longacre and the envy of the Bois de Boulogne, little do you know of the sights which are to be seen by the side of that very drive with which you are so familiar, after the sun has gone down, and darkness has closed over the trees of the Row and the Ladies'-Mile. Little do you know, perhaps it is well for the sake of your peace, that you do not know, how your sisters are living and dying in this same park ; living and dying at this hour at which I write, within sound of the traffic of Piccadilly, within sight of the windows of Park Lane. You are happy at being able to shut your eyes to this social sore ; you are happy in knowing nothing whatever about it ; you are not too well pleased at its being even named within your hearing. And indeed, it is not a subject fit for ears polite. But all the same it is one of the most ghastly of the many ghastly sides of London life.

Ellen, the woman of the parks, was dying. Death's broad arrow was stamped indelibly upon her forehead ; and upon that face and forehead there were also stamped the signs of want and vice and misery. She was no object over which a fine lady might have grown sentimental : no Magdalen, such as Correggio loved to paint, with snowy skin and well-turned shoulders, and infantile grace and innocence mocking her sin. She was worn away by privation and disease till she was little better than a skeleton ; yesterday her face was positively loathsome, and to-day it was only redeemed from that loathsomeness by the mysterious calm which was already settling upon it, the calm which, God be thanked, settles on every wearied face at last.

Something like a smile flitted over her countenance when Gerald entered, and, too weak to beckon him to her side, she drew him towards her by her lustrous eyes.

He knelt down by the side of the wretched heap of rags, awed and subdued by the presence of Death. With a strange eagerness she began to speak as soon as he was close to her.

"I said I would tell you my name. I told you that you must save my sister, if you can, from ever coming to my end—my little sister that's not yet grown to be a woman. Will you promise to save her if you can?"

"Yes, I promise," said Gerald.

"And will you promise—will you swear that you will bring ruin upon any man that hurts her—will you swear that?"

She was exciting herself so much that even Gerald, inexperienced as he was, saw that she was running the risk of snapping in an instant the frail thread by which her life now hung. He



paused before he answered this appeal, but when he saw her exciting herself once more to repeat her prayer he said, "Yes, I promise that also. I swear it if you wish."

"Oh! thank you, thank you! I shall die happy now."

Even as she spoke the shadows of death were closing fast upon her.

"But you have not given me your name yet, or your sister's either."

"I haven't told you my name yet. I'm coming, mother." Her mind was wandering, her voice was sinking to a whisper.

"Your name?" said Gerald, anxious to keep his promise.

"My name? My name—is—Mary Heaton—and my sister's—name—is Grace. Bonny Gracie——" And even as she spoke she smiled—and died.

No loving hand had smoothed her pillow in her last moment; no tender voice had whispered of hope beyond the grave; no gentle care had ministered to her sore wants. She had died as the world believes such a creature ought to die—with no prayers offered by her side; no tears shed over her sunken face. She had died as thousands of her sisters die in Christian England every year.

## CHAPTER X.

### PETER DAWSON RETIRES FROM BUSINESS.

NOTHING could exceed the confidence reposed by Laura in her handsome lover. The art of loving has not yet, happily, been lost; and young hearts are still given away with as much warmth and unreserve as ever. When, therefore, Sir Arthur Lumley found himself at the Eaves House, the betrothed husband of Laura Harcourt, he found also that he was already as absolutely master of her affections as the most exacting of men could have wished to be.

They were delightful days, those which he spent in the old-fashioned Lancashire house by the side of the girl he had won. He was very much in love; he knew that he had won a great prize, that Laura was a woman who would have adorned any station in life, and who had the capacity for making any home a happy one; and after the fashion of men, his pride was almost as deeply gratified as his affections by the conquest he had made. Her peerless beauty, her ancient lineage, her father's fame—I am afraid these were the things he thought of most, when he found himself her betrothed lover. For though he loved her, he loved her "as a man is able." He liked her tender gracious ways; he was made happy by the bright smile which flashed from

her dark eyes, and something within him responded with a secret thrill whenever she addressed him ; but I do not suppose that he ever thought that a heart which might be crowned with joy or crushed with misery, had been committed to his keeping ; or that he felt *all* the responsibility which falls upon a man when the soul of another is entrusted to him. Was he worse than others in this respect ? I trow not. Lovers are not metaphysicians or philosophers. It is enough for them to feel their bliss without analysing it, or studying all that it involves.

So Arthur and Laura were as happy as any other couple of engaged lovers can hope to be. Neither of them had been brought up in such a manner as to make them absolute martyrs to conventional restraints. Laura, indeed, was the member of a family which was nothing if it was not natural ; and Arthur's matchless tact was as useful in preserving him from the stiffness of mere etiquette, as in saving him from the opposite extreme.

The wedding was hurried on despite the remonstrances of Mr. Harcourt, who still in his heart cherished many misgivings, and who was as far from forgiving Arthur for his treatment of Gerald, as he had ever been. There was no good reason why the marriage should have been fixed for the coming spring—none, except the impatience of the young baronet. But in these matters the lover generally has his own way ; and so the date of the wedding was fixed for a very early period in the coming year.

Arthur had many things besides his visits to the Eaves House to occupy him in the interval. There were numerous preparations to be completed at Lumley Hall for the reception of its new mistress ; there were marriage settlements to be drawn up, and wedding presents to be bought ; there was the town house—which as the personal property of Sir George Lumley had gone to the creditors of the Grand Alliance Discount Company—to be repurchased ; and there was the management of the estates to be looked into with a view to the appointment of a new agent in the place of Peter Dawson.

When that worthy man received from Sir Arthur the announcement that after a certain date his services would be dispensed with, but that in consideration of his long connection with the family a moderate pension would be allowed him for the remainder of his life, he uttered no word of remonstrance. He made very particular inquiries as to the precise amount of the annuity which was to be settled upon him, and when his curiosity upon that point had been settled, he was profuse in his expressions of gratitude for that which was after all but a very small favour ; and his gratitude was still further increased when he heard that he was to be permitted to retain the humble cottage at the park

gate where he had lived since he first came to Lumley. He made himself so very agreeable in fact that Sir Arthur felt rather inclined to blame himself for having dealt somewhat harshly with him in thus cutting him adrift, and was inclined to wonder whether it might not have been possible to turn him to some good account as a friend, instead of leaving him to assume if he chose the character of a foe. It was doubtless this consideration which led the baronet to make the concession with respect to the cottage; for when he first resolved to part with Dawson he had intended to get rid of him altogether. Now, however, he felt that it might upon the whole be as well to remain upon friendly terms with him as not; so in those frequent visits to the Hall which he now paid he not only consulted the agent's views upon many points, but took as much pains to soothe and conciliate him as though he had been a person of the first importance. Dawson accepted all his attentions without making any sign; and the baronet, who was accustomed to succeed when he undertook to please any one, never doubted but that he had been as successful as usual in this case. Mr. Peter Dawson was, it must be confessed, somewhat too "deep" to be sounded in a moment by Sir Arthur Lumley.

In the meantime it was of course necessary to procure another agent, and the new owner of the property was resolved to have one of quite a different character to Dawson. He saw his friend, Mr. Hickson, finding him as usual in the smoking-room at the Guelph. It was January now, and town was of course very dull, but Carney had come back to London immediately after Christmas, and had already established himself in his favourite corner in the smoking-room, there to hold his own until another twelfth of August shone upon the world.

"Getting ready for your marriage, Lumley?" cried Hickson when the baronet entered the room where he was seated. "Don't believe I've congratulated you yet. Wish you joy, my boy; you're a lucky fellow."

"I know that, Carney. But why don't you get married yourself?"

"Ah! my dear boy; you are like all the rest of the young men when they have been caught—want everybody else to fall into the same trap. Not that I think you have fallen into a trap, for I know you have not; and, as I said before, I think you are a frightfully lucky fellow. But everybody can't have your luck, and therefore everybody can't marry."

Arthur was thoroughly goodnatured, so far as the popular acceptance of the term goes, and having been made happy himself by the prospect of his approaching marriage, he would gladly have seen all his friends made happy in the same way, so he con-



tinued to enlarge to Mr. Carnaby Hickson upon the merits of matrimony, until the latter was compelled to exclaim :

"There, there, my boy; don't press me any further. The fact is, that besides having a general detestation for all ladies—and I'm afraid the feeling is mutual—I am unfortunate enough to be too poor to dream of keeping either a wife or a horse—the latter for choice. Your Carnaby, my child, is the most unhappy of paupers, and is doomed to live upon an income which might be multiplied ten-fold without causing either himself or his bankers the slightest inconvenience."

Remembering that he had never seen "his Carnaby" deny himself a single luxury, with the exception of the aforesaid horse, and knowing that he always smoked the finest cigars, drank the choicest wines, wore Poole's most perfect garments, and mixed with the best men about town, Arthur found it rather difficult to realize the fact of his poverty, and thought it well to change the subject.

"I came up to town, Hickson, on purpose to consult you. You know I have constituted you my chief adviser, and whatever may be the case after my marriage——"

"It will be different then, my child," interposed the other with a rueful and melancholy shake of the head.

"Well, well, I'm not married yet, and there is nothing so far to prevent my taking your advice. The fact is, I have given my present agent notice to quit. I didn't like the fellow; and I believe that at first he didn't like me; thought me an interloper and all that sort of thing. I've won him over now"—(this with a pleasant air of self-confidence). "But still I want to get rid of him, and I'm looking out for some one to succeed him. Can you help me?"

"I've no doubt I can, but I must know first what sort of man you want, and how you propose to pay him."

"Well, this Dawson is only a common fellow—a gardener, or something of that sort, to begin with—and my uncle didn't by any means overpay him. I want a gentleman, a man with whom I can associate on equal terms, for, upon my word, it's dreadfully dull down at Lumley."

"Would you want him to live down there always? Would you have any objection to his coming up to town during the season? You know, if you get a gentleman, you can't expect him to bury himself down in Midlandshire all the year round."

Carney said this with a livelier expression on his face than that which it usually wore when he was engaged in his favourite occupation of giving advice to his friends.

"Oh! I should treat him as a gentleman, of course; and so

long as he looked after the rents and the labourers, and saw that nobody swindled me either here or in the country, he would be pretty much his own master, and could live where he liked. I should want him though to come down to Lumley in the autumn and winter."

"Is that all? Then, my boy, if you are disposed to have him, I can give the very strongest possible recommendation to a gentleman who will only be too glad to act as your agent."

"Indeed. Who is he?"

"Myself."

"You, Carney!"

"Yes. It's only too true that I am, as I told you just now, uncommonly hard up at present, and as I think I could do your business as well as most men, I should be glad to undertake it."

"And I shall be only too glad to make you my agent, Carney: there's nobody in London whom I would rather have."

So the question of Peter Dawson's successor was finally settled, and when that excellent man retired upon his pension, Mr. Carnaby Hickson, of the Guelph Club, was duly installed in his place.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to observe that the new agent conducted his business in a very different manner to that in which Dawson had been in the habit of doing it. He was a shrewd, far-seeing man of the world, and possibly Arthur Lumley could hardly have found a better man to watch over the interests of his vast estate. But Carney was far too much of the man about town to dream for a single moment of condescending to the kind of work which Dawson had cheerfully done. So clerks and bailiffs had to be engaged to execute Mr. Hickson's behests, and very soon that gentleman found himself at the head of quite a little establishment of his own in the offices at the hall.

The smoking-room at Lumley was a new apartment fitted up with as much taste and elegance as though it were intended to be a lady's boudoir. For Sir Arthur Lumley, like most of the new generation, was, if not a slave, at any rate a very devoted subject of tobacco, and where the former owner of the hall had a study, Arthur now had a smoking-room. Furnished under his own directions, he was rather proud of it, and it was here that during the weeks immediately preceding his marriage, he used to spend his evenings in the company of Carney Hickson, who was really working hard mastering the accounts, and aiding the baronet in his preparations for the advent of a new mistress at the hall.

"How do you like that fellow Dawson?" he asked Carnaby

one evening when every topic of deeper interest had been exhausted.

"Ah! I wanted to talk to you about that gentleman. He's a precious deep old file."

"He thinks he is," said Arthur, with a laugh; "but I imagine I've turned him inside out."

"Do you; then with all due respect, my boy, I should say that you are mistaken."

"Do you mean that you think he really is as deep as he looks?"

"I mean that I know he is."

"But what can the fellow do? I've nothing to fear from him."

"No; I do not think you have. But look here, Lumley," said Hickson, with a cool freedom of bearing by no means common on the part of an agent towards his employer. "There's no use in our blinking the fact that you came in here by a fluke."

"Really, Hickson, you give it an ugly name. I don't like those horrible words," and Sir Arthur tossed his handsome head and pouted after the manner of a petted child. "I came in here under the law, and in a strictly legal manner."

"There is no doubt you did, but all the same your succession is something upon which a man like Dawson, with the training and instincts of a peasant, must have some queer ideas. Then you know, he is mixed up with the whole affair himself; he's almost one of the family—uncle of the last Lady Lumley."

"He'd better not presume on that fact, Hickson."

"Well, my dear fellow, do you not perceive that you owe everything you have to him and his? If it had not been for Miss Phœbe's charms, you would still have been the penniless captain, and that cub would have been reigning here in your place. But what I want to tell you is that though I have tried hard to fathom Dawson, I've not been able to do so yet. I can't make out that he is particularly attached to the interests of Sir George's son; but I'm quite sure of one thing, and that is that he is not attached to your interests."

"What makes you think that?"

"Oh! I have a thousand little reasons for thinking so. I've been watching the scoundrel ever since I came down, and my opinion is that he's got possession of some secret which he imagines gives him a hold over you. What it is, goodness only knows. I don't. But, I know these sort of men, and I'm sure that he wouldn't have been so confoundedly impudent and inde-



pendent towards me, if he hadn't thought that he had got the whip hand."

Arthur Lumley was evidently disquieted by this speech. He looked uneasily at his friend, and seemed to be at a loss what to understand from his words. At last he said, "I think, Carney, that it is his impudence which has annoyed you, and made you think worse of him than you otherwise would do. Is it not so, old fellow?"

"No, it is not," responded the agent. "You know, Lumley, I have had a good deal to do with people of this sort, and I know their ways. I know how they cringe to a gentleman, 'for 'tis their nature to,' and I know that this Peter Dawson would beyond doubt have cringed to me, if he hadn't thought that somehow or other he had got the whip hand of both of us. I only hope that he's mistaken."

"But how on earth *can* he have the whip hand of me, Carney? You talk in enigmas."

Mr. Carnaby Hickson did not answer for a moment, but continued to puff at his cigar, calmly and steadily, whilst through the thin cloud of blue smoke, he kept his eye fixed upon the baronet, whose uneasiness was now such that it would have been manifest even to the dullest of observers.

At last he spoke, but it was in a lower tone than that which he usually employed, as though he were afraid that the very walls might have ears.

"Has it never occurred to you, Lumley, that your uncle's second marriage might after all be a valid one?"

"How could it be, when his first wife was living at the time he married Miss Clayton?"

"It might have been valid because, notwithstanding the evidence subsequently produced, and which you will remember was only documentary evidence, the first wife might have been dead at the time; it might have been valid, again, supposing this Phoebe Dawson had herself been married before she met Sir George."

"But you can't seriously put forward such ideas as these, Hickson. Do you think my uncle, who was so anxious to provide for his son, would have been satisfied of the invalidity of his second marriage, unless the evidence proving it was indisputable?"

Hickson shrugged his shoulders.

"My dear fellow," he said, "I never had any opinion of that unfortunate uncle of yours. He was wonderfully successful as a speculator, until he got that last terrible knock-down blow with the Grand Alliance; but he was never fit for anything else that I

knew of. That he might be deceived is quite within the range of possibility."

"But who would have deceived him?"

"Who? Why this man Dawson, to be sure. It was through Dawson that he first received the assurance that his wife had been living when he married again, and it was through him that he made the inquiries which were set on foot to establish the fact. That Dawson is in possession of some secret or other I am morally certain, and I have been lying awake for a good many nights past trying to build up some theory by which I might account for his conduct. What puzzles me in the matter, is that he hasn't as yet made any attempt to profit by his secret, if he has one."

"How could he have profited by it?" asked Arthur, whose face had lost that pleasant smile which it usually wore, and who, it must be confessed, was by no means so easy and graceful in his manner, at this moment, as he usually was. His agitation and restlessness, indeed, were strikingly in contrast with the cool and undisturbed bearing of his companion. Sir Arthur Lumley, the reader perceives, was already reaping some of the less pleasant fruits of wealth.

"Dawson might have made a wonderful profit out of this affair in Sir George's lifetime, if he had such a secret as that I have spoken of, and he may intend to make a handsome profit yet—out of you."

Arthur winced. "I wish you would speak plainly, Hickson," he said, with a peevishness quite unusual to him.

"I'm trying to speak plainly. Do you not see that if Sir George's second marriage were valid, you have no right to be here, and this man having proof of that, might be disposed to make terms with you—and I'm much mistaken if they would not be very stiff ones—for keeping the secret."

Arthur shivered and groaned when he heard this speech; then he said, eagerly:

"But you haven't any ground for believing that he does know any secret of the sort, Hickson."

"No, I haven't any ground, and I hope no such secret is in existence. All that I have to go upon is my—my presentiment, or if you like the word better, my conviction that he knows something which he believes is to your disadvantage."

"Then I wish you would keep your convictions and presentiments to yourself, Carney. I can assure you they are not calculated to raise a man's spirits on a winter night like this," and Sir Arthur Lumley drank eagerly from the glass of spirits which was placed beside him.

"Don't turn rusty, my dear boy," pursued the other, calmly.

"I'm only acting in your interest, and you know that I am. There is another hypothesis which I must put before you, however, before we drop the subject. It is that Sir George Lumley may have had a legitimate child as well as the cub."

"How could one child be legitimate and the other not?"

"Don't you see that the first Lady Lumley went away a few months after her marriage and was never seen again. Supposing that after her flight she had a child?"

"Supposing she had, what then?"

"What then? Why, if it was a boy, and if the boy is still living he is the real baronet and owner of the property."

"Upon my word, Carnaby, you're a pleasant sort of companion," cried Arthur, angrily. "You come here to bear me company, and, instead of saying anything or doing anything to make the time pass pleasantly, you fill me with all manner of gloomy forebodings; and seem bent upon doing your best to show that I am nothing better than impostor and rogue. I wish to goodness you would hold your tongue if you can't put pleasanter thoughts into my head than these."

"Really, Lumley," said Hickson as he mixed a fresh glass of spirits and began to sip it gently, "I never saw you put out of temper before. It's quite refreshing. However, we'll drop the subject as you propose. I daresay I am nothing better than a wretched hypochondriac; but for all that I certainly intend to keep my eye upon Mr. Peter Dawson."

Carnaby Hickson kept his word, and for some days after this conversation he saw as much of Dawson as he possibly could do. That Dawson was engaged in what his successor called "a game of dodging" was evident to him. The old man, who had now ceased to have any active share in the business of the estate, was perpetually moving about the office in a stealthy mysterious manner. What his object was Hickson could not tell; though he was determined to discover it. The crack member of the Guelph Club, accordingly, having warmed to the sport, stopped short at nothing in his efforts to discover what Dawson was about. The two were apparently playing a game at hide and seek. Hickson took to making sudden descents at all kinds of untimely hours upon Dawson's cottage, on the pretence of requiring information on some subject connected with the estate. He began at the same time to leave the office, telling the clerk that he would not return for some length of time, and then he would suddenly return, and rush into his own room, the room which Dawson had formerly used, in the hope of finding him there, and discovering some clue to the mystery.



It was all in vain, however. Whenever he did encounter Dawson unexpectedly, he was received by the old man with an air of perfect unconsciousness. The faithful servant of Sir George Lumley would rub his sunken lantern jaws with his lean and knotted hand, when the new agent suddenly burst into his presence in this fashion, and he would gaze at him with a stealthy side-long glance, which even Hickson, cool and self-possessed as he always was, found to be somewhat uncomfortable. That certain books, papers, and drawers were at times meddled with in his absence, was a fact of which he was certain; nevertheless he could obtain no explanation of the circumstances upon which he founded this belief. His clerk was evidently ignorant of the matter, and he did not venture to arouse Dawson's suspicions by questioning him upon the subject.

Success at last, however, crowned Mr. Hickson's self-denying labours. Having as usual one day left his room with much ostentation, on the pretence that he was going for a walk to a neighbouring village, and having duly made his exit at the front door of the hall, he stole back to the house by another path, and concealing himself at much personal inconvenience, and the risk of no little damage to his clothes, in a closet commanding a view of the door of the office, he proceeded to wait there as patiently as he could for anything which might turn up.

He was rewarded after a weary hour's watch, by seeing Peter Dawson enter the office, quietly and stealthily. With immense self-control, Mr. Carnaby Hickson remained where he was until he had counted five hundred calmly and deliberately. Then, thinking he had given the foe time to commit himself, he quietly stole forward, and darted into his room.

There, upon his knees in one corner, bending over an open drawer filled with dusty and discoloured papers, was Dawson. Hickson's mind was instantly made up as to how he should act. He closed the door behind him, and then quietly said,

"Now, my worthy friend, I think the time has come when, without doing you any injustice, I may ask what your little game is?"

Dawson had been apparently much startled when the other entered the room. Now, however, he rose from his knees with an air of dogged obstinacy, rather than of shame or confusion, and stood eyeing Carnaby whilst he rubbed his jaws with his huge hands. He made no attempt to speak in answer to the words just addressed to him.

"Ah!" said Hickson to himself, "you're defiant, are you, my friend; or are you simply dumb-founded at being detected? We'll soon see." Then aloud with an air of the most profound

courtesy, he added, "Take a seat, Mr. Dawson; you were not in a very comfortable position when I found you. Pray take a seat."

Sullenly, the other sat down in the nearest chair.

"Now, let me repeat my inquiry. What is your little game?"

"What is my little game Mr. Carnaby Hickson? Is that what you ask?"

"You couldn't have repeated my question more accurately, Mr. Dawson. I congratulate you upon your excellent memory," said the other with much politeness.

"Look you here, sir," proceeded Dawson in a hesitating manner, which was, however, entirely different from the cringing deference he had been in the habit of showing to his superiors in the life-time of the late baronet: "Look you here, sir; I've been upon this estate for nigh fifty year past; and I never was asked before what my little game was; and to be plain with you, sir; I'm an unlettered man and I don't know what you mean."

"Oh! innocence, that's the part you propose to play, is it?" said Hickson to himself. "Then, Mr. Dawson, I'll tell you what I mean," he continued, "I want to know why you are always coming into this room when I am absent, and rummaging among papers with which you have now nothing whatever to do?"

"Oh, sir! I beg your pardon, sir," said the other with something of a return to his accustomed deference of manner but at the same time with a sly twinkle in his fishy eye which Carnaby did not fail to note. "You see I'm not accustomed to the way in which you gents call things, and I didn't quite understand what you meant when you talked about my little game. Why"—with an air of immense candour—"I took the liberty of coming in here to look for a bit of paper of mine which I've lost, and which rather bothers me."

"What is it?" said Hickson, sharply.

"What is it? Why it's nothing that a gentleman like you would think of any great consequence. Its only a little bit of a memorandum like, about some property belonging to a young friend of mine."

There was an unwholesome light in the man's red eyes as he uttered these words which Carnaby Hickson by no means liked. Moreover the words themselves had an ominous sound in the agent's ears. Nevertheless he smiled easily and confidently when Dawson ceased to speak.

"I must really beg your pardon," he said, "for having used such shockingly vulgar slang as that which I employed just now. However, your explanation is quite satisfactory. I am only sorry that I must ask you to reserve your search on your young friend's behalf to a more convenient opportunity. I want to use my room

just now. No; never mind the papers; leave the papers: I'll put them back myself," he added in a tone which was not to be resisted by the other, when Dawson turned as though he wished to restore the scattered documents to their place.

Slowly and sullenly the old man walked out of the room without another word. As he closed the door behind him, Carney shook his fist towards him, and muttered between his teeth, "You scoundrel! we know each other now; it's war to the knife between us; but cunning as you are, I back myself to win."

Then Carnaby Hickson, Esq., of the Guelph Club, St. James', the man who had never before been known by his most intimate friends to do a single hour's hard work, locked the door of his room, took off his coat, and kneeling down on the very spot where Dawson had been kneeling just before, proceeded to examine the various dusty documents which were scattered around him.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A DISCOVERY.

LAURA was seated with her mother in the comfortable morning room at the Eaves House. The girl's face wore that expression of rest and peace which only the face of a maiden about to become the wife of the man she loves, ever does wear. Mr. Harcourt had gone back to town, for the Cabinet Councils had re-commenced, in another fortnight Parliament would meet, in less than a month Laura's wedding-day would come round.

The mother and daughter were very much together just now. Both were perfectly satisfied with what they had done in breaking down Mr. Harcourt's opposition to the marriage. Laura, of course, was satisfied because she loved, and in her love imagined that nothing but the most hopeless blindness on the part of her father could have caused him to fail in seeing Arthur's virtues. Mrs. Harcourt was satisfied because she felt that she had secured her daughter's happiness, and because she believed that the girl's lover was in every way worthy of her. So these two sat this morning with an air of perfect contentment, Laura engaged in writing those mysterious notes to friends and tradesmen which must apparently be sown "thick as leaves in Vallambrosa" before a wedding; Mrs. Harcourt busy with some fancy work of which the good lady was rather fond.

"Oh, Laura, dear," said the mother, breaking the silence which had reigned for some time in the quiet room, "I forgot to tell you that your father says he has heard again from poor Gerald."



"What does he say about him, mamma?" asked Laura, with a bright blush.

"He says that he has gone down to some horrible pit village near Newcastle, where he is learning to be a mining engineer. He seems to be getting on very nicely, your father thinks; he wouldn't write to say where he was until he knew whether he was likely to succeed there. Now he says that he finds himself amongst friends, and with every prospect of success, and he thanks your father for his kindness to him."

"Poor boy!" sighed Laura, tenderly; and then she felt guilty of treason to her lover in bestowing even a thought upon his cousin.

"He will be a relative of yours, when you are married, Laura; I'm very sorry for him, poor fellow, and I was dreadfully distressed when he disappeared without saying where he had gone to."

"Does papa say if he thinks he can do anything for him?" inquired the damsel.

"He says that Gerald won't listen to any offers of assistance from him. I wish he would be reasonable and would let your papa use his influence on his behalf."

"I wish he would," ejaculated Laura, and then she returned to her letters.

Presently the door was opened, and a servant announced that "a young person to see Mrs. Harcourt" was waiting in the hall.

"Oh! mamma, is it my new maid?" cried Laura, eagerly. "If it is, you must let me see her before you engage her; for you know I must have a nice girl now that I'm going away from all the old servants."

"Of course you shall see her," was the response, and the girl was forthwith shown into the room. A slim pretty girl of nineteen, child-like in manners and appearance, with one of those refined and delicate faces which we sometimes see in women of this class, the "new maid" produced a decidedly favourable impression upon both mother and daughter. She had been strongly recommended by a neighbour in the country, in whose service she had been, and as a Lancashire girl, she had an additional claim to the favour of Laura, who in going from home to settle in Midlandshire, felt that she must surround herself with as many people from the old home as she could gather together. The old preference for Burniston ways and Burniston folk, had evidently not yet quite died away in her breast.

Therefore, when the many questions which ladies have to put on such occasions had been asked and answered satisfactorily, and when the written testimony had also been pronounced to be all that could be desired, Laura gladly engaged the Lancashire girl

as her future maid, in preference to those accomplished London and Parisian females who had already made application for the post.

“What is your name?” asked Mrs. Harcourt, who had vainly endeavoured to decypher the writing of the aristocratic friend upon whose recommendation Laura was taking the girl.

“Grace Heaton, ma’am,” was the reply; and as the girl uttered the simple words, neither mother nor daughter knew that warp and woof of the tangled plot of their lives were already being interwoven. But so it was.

The weeks flew rapidly on. Arthur paid another visit to the Eaves House to see his betrothed; and then Mrs. Harcourt and the family went up to town where the marriage was to take place. Everything was got ready for the event which was to change the tenour of two lives at least. The day was duly announced beforehand in the columns of the *Court Journal* and the *Morning Post*, and society, slowly beginning to return to town in these February weeks, was interesting itself in the affair just as much as it does with any other marriage in “high life”—to borrow the language of the estimable Jenkins.

Mr. Carnaby Hickson, amongst others, was looking longingly towards London, and sighing for his accustomed corner at the Club. Nevertheless he remained firmly at his post at Lumley. Not for a single day had he left the Hall since that interview with Dawson which is described in the last chapter; and all this time he had been pursuing his investigations into the “secret” which he believed to exist at Lumley.

Sir Arthur Lumley had at first been very much disquieted by his friend’s presentiments, but the impression they had made upon him was beginning to wear off; he was too happy in the prospect of his approaching marriage, and he felt too secure in the possession of his property, to trouble himself for any length of time about the vague suspicions which another man might entertain. Sometimes there would flit across the handsome sunny face a shadow of gloom; and the usual gaiety of his manner would disappear. At such times Arthur Lumley was thinking about his cousin Gerald, and was feeling some regret at the manner in which the boy had been treated. But he no longer needed Carney Hickson’s assistance in order to convince himself that he had only acted towards his cousin as the world would have had him to act. He had himself, by this time, become a master of the world’s wisdom, and sentiments at the bare thought of which he would have blushed with shame a year ago, were now dwelt upon by him without dislike and even with approval.

So, upon the whole, Sir Arthur Lumley was as happy a man as any to be found in Midlandshire. He rejoiced in the bride he had won; he rejoiced in the splendid house and park which were now his own; he rejoiced in the vast wealth which had fallen into his hands, and it was but seldom that he troubled himself with the thought that after all he had come into the possession of these things—to use the words of Carney Hickson—"by a fluke."

"What's the matter now, Carney?" asked the baronet one morning, when his agent unceremoniously entered his favourite apartment—the smoking-room.

The question was by no means unnatural, for that something was the matter with the usually cool and imperturbable club man was evident. His face was white, there was an unwholesome perspiration about his temples, and his lips were so dry that he kept licking them with his tongue after the fashion of an animal.

"What is it?" repeated Arthur, when he failed to get an answer to his first question.

"I'll tell you directly. Give me some brandy first, Lumley," gasped the other.

The brandy was soon administered, and Hickson began to revive.

"By Jove!" he said, when the colour was beginning to steal back into his cheeks, "I never knew before that I could be knocked over in that fashion."

"For heaven's sake tell me what it is that has knocked you over," cried the other impatiently.

Mr. Hickson, it was evident, did not like the task which lay before him. He again drained a liqueur glass of cognac, and not until he had done so did he attempt to proceed.

"I always told you I was sure that scoundrel had a secret," he said at last.

"Dawson, you mean?"

"Yes; Dawson, curse him! Well, I've got a clue to it now, and upon my word, Lumley, it knocked me over awfully."

"I see something has knocked you over, and if you'll only tell me what it is I'll feel obliged to you."

"All right; you'll know soon enough for your own comfort, my boy," said Carny, with something like a return to his accustomed easy manner, "I've watched the blackguard high and low, in the house and out of the house, by night and by day. About three weeks ago I got the first scent when I pounced upon him in the office, searching amongst the papers in a drawer of the old bureau. When I asked him what he wanted he told me that he was looking for a memorandum about some property which belonged to a young friend of his. I'd have given something if I



might have knocked him down as he stood there, for I thought I saw well enough by the sly insolence of his manner who the 'young friend' was.

"Who was it?" asked Arthur, who was listening with fixed attention to the other's words.

"I thought it was your wretched young cub of a cousin, but I'm sorry to say I was mistaken. Since that time I've had every scrap of paper or parchment in the offices overhauled. I've knocked out the ends of drawers to see whether they were not false; I've taken up carpets and laid them down again with my own hands—and beastly dirty work it was; I've been half up that infernal chimney, and it's a mercy that I didn't stick there, for I was nearly choked before I could get down again; but you see I thought he might have made a "chimney-corner" business of it ——"

"For heaven's sake, Carney, don't keep me in suspense any longer; come to the point. What have you found?"

"My boy, I've found this, which I hope means nothing at all, but which may mean a great deal. I discovered it half-an-hour ago inside a lease, where I suppose it had been accidentally enclosed the last time the beast had it."

With this Carnaby Hickson produced a crumpled sheet of blue foolscap, upon the first page of which there was written, in the bold but somewhat straggling hand of Peter Dawson, the following words :—

"Statement of Peter Dawson respecting the Lumley entail, and the right of succession thereto.

"I, Peter Dawson, agent of the Lumley estates under the late Sir George Lumley, and now under notice to give up the said agency at the hands of the person now in possession of those estates, calling himself Sir Arthur Lumley, being at this moment in good health and of sound mind, and being wishful to preserve the succession to the Lumley estates in the direct and rightful line, and to prevent those estates passing into the hands of those who are not the rightful heirs, make this solemn statement of facts which are within my knowledge :—

"First, I do solemnly declare of my own knowledge that my niece, the late Phoebe, Lady Lumley, had issue to the late Sir George Lumley six months after her flight from Lumley Park, that is to say on the eighth of February, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, when she bore a twin son and daughter, the lawfully-begotten children of the said Sir George ——"

• There the statement ended abruptly. Apparently Dawson

had been engaged in writing it when he had been interrupted. The important document had been slipped aside, and he had been unable to discover it afterwards.

"What do you think of it?" asked Hickson when Arthur Lumley had read the lines written on the paper.

There was such a ghastly look upon the young baronet's face that his friend was justified in returning him the good office which he had just received at his hands. The cognac was again employed, and Arthur drunk heavily of it. Then, starting up with a frightful oath, he would have flung the fatal paper upon the fire, but Hickson prevented him.

"Don't be foolish, Lumley. We need all our wits about us," he said quietly. "I confess I was knocked over myself when I first found this precious thing; but I'm all right again now."

"But why may I not burn it?" asked Arthur hoarsely.

"Simply because to burn it will do no good to anybody at present. Don't you see that this wretched scrap of paper is utterly worthless of itself? Dawson may have made fifty other statements of the same sort, and signed them all in the presence of witnesses. This is a mere draft, and of no effect whatever."

"It's effective enough to show me that I am an impostor."

"If it's true it certainly does that," was the cool response, "but our first business must be to discover that it is true."

"And if it should be true?"

"Why then, my dear fellow," said Carney shrugging his shoulders and raising his eyebrows, "we are in rather an awkward mess."

"Shall I have to give up the title and property?" asked Arthur, upon whose face there was now a settled gloom.

"Not if it can be helped, my boy. Don't despair, Lumley. This scoundrel may have no foundation whatever for his cursed 'statement,'—which he seems, by the way, to have drawn up on the model of somebody's will; but even supposing that it is founded upon fact, there are fifty modes of escape for you, and if the worst comes to the worst, Dawson himself must be silenced. That would be effectual, for it's pretty certain that nobody else knows anything of these children, if indeed they have ever existed."

"But how can we silence him?"

Carnaby Hickson looked steadily into the face of his friend for a few moments. What did he see there? He saw a sunny, handsome face, covered just now with a cloud of anxiety and bewilderment. Not a bad or vicious face by any means; but a weak, irresolute face—the face of a man who might mean well but who was as likely as most people, if sorely tempted, to act

anything but well. The older man seemed satisfied with what he saw.

"There are several ways in which Mr. Peter Dawson may be effectually silenced, Lumley, if it is necessary that he should be silenced. We might buy him off, for instance, though I confess to you I have my doubts as to whether we should succeed in an attempt of that sort. And there are other ways of silencing him quite as effectual, and perhaps not so costly. Twenty thousand a year and a baronetcy are not to be given up without a struggle. Are they, Lumley?"

The younger man quailed under the steady gaze of the other, who seemed able to read his inmost thoughts. He made no answer, but a hot, guilty flush mounted to his temples.

"After all, you know," resumed Hickson, in quite a different voice, "this may only be a fluke on the part of Mr. Peter Dawson."

This was possible, but it did not seem that Sir Arthur Lumley had much hope of it. During that short interview, in which Carney Hickson had made known his discovery to him, he had become a changed man. He was paying the penalty of wealth. He had committed no crime in entering upon the possession of the great estates which he had inherited from his uncle. His act in doing so had been perfectly justifiable in the eyes of the law. But now he was discovering what the temptations of great wealth are. He had no hope that this unsigned and imperfect document from the hand of Peter Dawson was inaccurate. He instantly recognised truth in every line of it, and he felt an inward conviction that he was no longer anything but an interloper at Lumley. For a moment, beset as he was by perplexity and temptation, he could not help wishing that he was once more the poor captain. But then he remembered Laura, and he reflected upon all the good things of the world which now belonged to him. He could not give them up. They had become too precious to him during these months of ownership to be parted with. He was determined to retain them at all costs, and at any risk. "Dawson must be silenced." When Sir Arther Lumley heard these words from the lips of Hickson, there was murder in his heart, and the other knew it.

Henceforward the young baronet is to carry about with him a ceaseless cause of care and anxiety. Rolling in wealth, and surrounded by all those things which the world esteems, all those blessings which the worldly covet, he is to live in perpetual dread of the hour when some unknown hand shall sweep away the imposture which he is practising, and another shall be raised to the place which he now holds.



He has sold himself for gold and the things which it can buy, and already he is beginning to pay the price of his bad bargain.

Carnaby Hickson, as a man of the world, took nearly as gloomy a view of the case as Arthur himself did.

"There's no use in hiding it," he said to himself as he pondered over the affair after his interview with his friend, "there's no use in trying to deceive myself. I always knew that fellow had a secret, and I am convinced that this is it. The only thing I can do now is to try and circumvent him for the sake of my unfortunate patron."

Carney was a "man of honour," according to the polite world's ideas of the term. No man could have given him the lie with impunity, and despite his impecuniosity, no one could charge him with having ever sponged upon a friend. He was loyal to any one with whose interests he identified himself. He was a pleasant, agreeable, selfish man-about-town, in whom you would not have looked for any very striking display of virtue; but to whom you would never have dreamt of attributing any very odious crime. Nevertheless, there is a cruel and resolute expression on his face when he says this to himself about "circumventing" Dawson, which does not lead you to imagine that he will be very scrupulous in the means which he employs to effect his purpose.

So now there is plot and counter-plot at work at Lumley Hall; for Peter Dawson also has his plot in hand, though what it is time must be left to show.

Little does Laura think, as she dreams of the time which is now so near when she is to be made one with the man she loves, the man whom, after the manner of women, she has endowed with all the attributes of perfection, into what sore straits of temptation her lover has entered; or what sluice-gates of sin have been opened upon his soul. She knows him as all that is kind, and good, and loveable; as the man so gentle and yet so brave; so noble and yet so modest, that he has but to claim hearts, even in cold Belgravia, in order to make them his own. Does she ever think, I wonder, of the other heart which belongs to her—the heart, full of impulse and passion, but true and loyal at the core, which beats in the breast of the youth who is wearily beginning the battle of life in far-away Northumberland?

I fear she hasn't even a thought for Gerald just now. Amiable and tender as she is by nature, at this time all her amiability and all her tenderness are diverted into one channel. But if she has no thought of him, you may be sure that Gerald thinks much of her, and even at this moment his pillow is wet with the bitter and despairing tears which he sheds over his love. For he has long since learned what the end of that love is to be, and he has

counted the days as often as Laura herself has done, until that eventful day when she is to be removed even from the region of hope, so far as he is concerned.

Bitter as have been Gerald's many sorrows during these critical months of his life, no other has been so bitter as this. He tosses on his bed in an anguish of jealousy which no words can describe; he utters fierce cries of shame and pain; he seems to carry about with him a festering wound which every fresh movement and every fresh thought only serve to aggravate.

Despite all his jealousy, however, and despite all Arthur's nervous fears of coming ills, the wedding day arrived at length. If it had differed in any respect from other days of the same kind, I might have felt myself justified in describing it fully. And, indeed, it was a pretty sight which was presented in the ugly church at Hanover Square, when the bridal party stood before the altar, or grouped themselves in the narrow aisle between the dingy pews. The wonderful beadle of the red hair and rubicund face, who presides over the rites of St. George's, was compelled to admit to an intimate friend whom he subsequently took into his confidence in the neighbouring public-house, that a prettier bride had never stood before the altar railings at that famous place; and if the manly soul which beat beneath the beadle's gown were thus moved by Laura's beauty, it is certain that the elderly pew-openers and the semi-fashionable ladies from Mayfair, who patronize them upon such occasions, were not less gratified by the appearance of the bridegroom, for Arthur was himself again to-day, and when he left the church with Laura, his wife, upon his arm, it seemed to him for the moment that all was bright before him; that a path on which the sun ever shone was that by which he was now to journey; that sweetness, and light, and beauty, and grace were henceforth to be the lot of his life.

Oh! happy people who enter upon married life with these sweet hopes: may your dream last long. Alas! a dream it is, and nothing more.

There was of course a wedding-breakfast, and if Mr. Harcourt was somewhat grave whilst the festivities lasted, his gravity seemed only due to the natural regret of the father at the loss of the daughter from her old home. For the rest, all was brightness and gaiety. Lord Cleverley was there, and made a charming speech in proposing the health of the bridesmaids, which everybody declared did credit to his lordship's head and heart. The noble earl distinguished himself in another way also; for quite oblivious of certain passages in the history of himself and Mr. Harcourt, which were not yet a twelvemonth old, and in which he

had expressed more than one opinion anything but complimentary to the bridegroom ; he now exerted himself in extolling his many virtues to all around him. Worthy old gentleman ! (For, between ourselves, Lord Cleverley *was* old ; nearly old enough, indeed, to have been Laura's grandfather ; this, however, it must be understood, is a secret ; for has not his lordship contrived to hood-wink even the irrepressible Debrett ?) His only object in doing this was to "make things pleasant" for his friend Harcourt. To make things pleasant to everybody, not excluding himself, was the object of the noble earl's life ; and it was wonderful how well he succeeded. He could talk over an irascible ambassador as well as he could conciliate an offended singer affronted by some slight on the part of a hostess. What more could you have wished ?

Long after the bride and bridegroom had left, and the rest of the company—which had not been large owing to the season of the year—had departed, Lord Cleverley remained behind chatting with Harcourt. Poor, dear gentleman ! His old enemy was making flying incursions upon his toes and ancles, warning him that he had been doing quite as much as was good for him ; but he refused to be beaten by it, and though he would not have been sorry to have been quietly at home in his bachelor house in Piccadilly, with no one near him but his discreet and faithful servant, he would not go until he had discussed all the latest "moves" with Harcourt, and had talked over the political prospects of the day at length.

Thus it happened that when the evening papers were brought into the statesman's room, Cleverley was still there. Happening to look at one of them for the purpose of correcting something which Harcourt had just said, he exclaimed,

"Here's another of those colliery accidents ; and it seems an uncommonly bad one. Two hundred lives lost."

"Indeed !" said Mr. Harcourt. "Where has it taken place ?"

"At a place called Moorfell, near Newcastle."

"Has it happened at the Moorfell pit ?" asked the other eagerly.

"Yes ; the Moorfell New Pit. Do you know anything about it ?"

"It's the place where poor Gerald Lumley is. I must telegraph and see whether he is safe or not. When did the accident happen ?"

"This morning," said Cleverley, casting his eye over the paper, "at the very hour at which we were in church."

Then Lord Cleverley felt compelled to ask what news there was of Gerald, and the other told him that in the autumn he had gone down to Northumberland, where he now was, in order to study



mining engineering, and that in his last letter he had said that he was living almost as much below ground as above it.

"I fear there's a great risk of his having been in the pit at the time of the accident. Poor lad! What a sad ending it would be to a sad life, if he were to perish in this way."

"It would indeed," said Cleverley, with one of those oaths which he seemed chiefly to employ for the purpose of emphasizing any specially charitable or virtuous sentiment. "He wasn't a pleasant lad,"—the peer could not, in spite of all his good nature, forget that he had once heard Gerald speak of him to Laura as "a gouty old fogey"—"he wasn't a pleasant lad, but this affair has been very hard upon him. Why Laura and he used to be like brother and sister at one time."

"Yes, they were," said Harcourt.

"Do you know," said his lordship, "that I never was as jealous of anybody in my life as I was of him. It's over now, and of course I have nothing but good wishes—fatherly wishes if you like—for Lady Lumley; but there was a time, not so long ago, as you know, when it was different, and at that time there was nobody who used to give me more anxiety than that poor boy."

Harcourt could not help smiling at the confession.

"I think you were mistaken," he said (and we all know that everybody but the father and mother is mistaken about the state of a child's affections); "Laura, I know, never dreamt of such a thing, and Gerald was a mere boy a year ago."

"All the same, he was a very formidable boy in my eyes at that time, but of course I had no idea then of what was going to happen. And so he's turning mining engineer now, you say? What they call a viewer in the North, I suppose? Well, if he hasn't been killed this morning, and if he only gets on with his studies at all decently, I'll look after him in a year or two. You know my property, such as it is, consists chiefly of collieries, and I've no doubt I can find plenty of work for a young fellow of any spirit." And then Lord Cleverley rose to go.

At that moment Arthur and his bride had reached the end of their short journey to the country-house where they were to spend their honey-moon; and, at that moment, three hundred miles away, there hung round the mouth of the Moorfell New Pit, a crowd of weeping women and children, waiting till their dead were dragged out of the darkness into the blessed light of day.

## GEMS FROM CLASSIC MINES. No. III.

SOPHOCLES, FRAGMENT. (STOBÆUS LXIII. 6.)

GODDESS fair,—beware my son !  
 Venus hath more names than one.  
 She is Heaven, and she is Hell,  
 She is might invincible ;  
 She is lust and strong desire,  
 She is fiercely madd'ning fire ;  
 She is joy, and she is gladness,  
 She is woe, and she is sadness ;  
 She is gentle, wrathful, good,  
 In her ever changeful mood.  
 Rest she knows not ; night and day,  
 Who is not her constant prey ?  
 In the scaly tribe supreme  
 Rules she 'neath old Ocean's stream ;  
 Gods beside their nectar lying,  
 Sorry mortals, daily dying,  
 Beasts of earth all stoop to her, ,  
 Feather'd fowls of highest air.  
 Bear witness, Heaven ! the Queen of Love  
 Rules tyrant in the breast of Jove.  
 Yes, she ever hath controll'd  
 Those of more than mortal mould ;  
 And if Heaven she conquers, then  
 Vain the strife of mortal men.  
 Thrice the contest we essay,  
 Thrice we rue the unequal fray ;  
 Recks she trusty sword nor shield,  
 In sevenfold armour dight we yield :  
 Then " mercy spare us, Queen of Love,"  
 Cry men below and gods above.

## ONE-SIDED EDUCATION.

A JEWISH SKETCH.

JEWISH education seems to be based on the idea that every male child should be brought up in a way that will best fit him to become a Rabbi. Everything, therefore, that does not directly minister to this end is thrown aside as useless. No inquiry is made as to whether this or that course of study may expand the intellect, or prepare the pupil to hold his own in after years amongst swift-footed runners in the race of science. Enough for the Israelite—be he of what rank he may—that he be trained to walk with grave decorum according to the traditions of his fathers, and if those traditions happen to lag behind the rest of the world, so much the worse for him, for he dare not move faster. To quicken his pace and outstep the Talmud, would practically amount to renouncing his Judaism. To loiter amongst the Rabbis in the rear of progressive thought, is deemed a sure title to the respectful admiration of his people.

In England—it may be granted at once—things have been steadily improving these fifty years past. When an Israelite can be written down as having carried off the highest distinctions which Cambridge has to bestow, it would be disingenuous to say of British Jews that they are insensible either to the charms or the rewards of science. Successful wranglers, however, are not typical Jews; and even supposing that they become more numerous than they are ever likely to be, there would be all the greater reason to confront the fact that they have achieved their distinction in the teeth of the most venerated teachers of their religion. Whether they are right or wrong in casting immemorial tradition to the winds, and entering the lists of secular learning with Christian competitors, is not the present question. All that is now aimed at is to establish the fact, that the Jewish system of education, when conducted according to Rabbinical precedent, is sternly repressive of all inquiries that may wander beyond the pages of the Talmud. The orthodox parent, therefore, must needs deliver over his son to a course of instruction which, however well it may fit him to take a seat amongst the Rabbis, can hardly insure esteem in the presence of men of science.



The true principle of Jewish education will be most certainly arrived at, not so much by studying the phenomena of a sudden and comparatively recent outbreak of literary zeal in England, France, or Germany, as by journeying to outlying countries, such—let us say—as Poland and Galicia, where primitive orthodoxy is maintained with a fierceness of energy which must be seen to be understood.

At five years of age the Israelitish boy is bound to be sent to school, according to the Rabbinical precept,\* which says that “at five years of age a child should study the Bible, at ten the Mishna,† at thirteen he should observe the precepts, at fifteen he should study the Gemara,† at eighteen he should enter into wedlock, at twenty he should pursue the study of the law and the observance of the precepts,” while it proceeds to define that “at thirty he has arrived at full strength, at forty he has arrived at understanding, at fifty he is qualified to give counsel, at sixty he is accounted aged, at seventy he is called grey, at eighty he may be accounted strong, at ninety fit only to discourse of the law, at a hundred as if already dead, and forgotten from the world.”

No parent under any set of circumstances instructs his own children, and as private tutors do not supersede, but only supplement the more regular teaching of a school, little choice is left him but to enter his son at the most convenient establishment. Choose which he will, he may as well take the nearest, for they are all conducted on the same principle. The sole difference lies in the gentleness or severity of the master. As to payment, hours, studies, and the rest, they are all alike.

The educational system has four great divisions. First of all comes

#### THE INFANT SCHOOL.

This is open to boys and girls alike, who can be entered and removed twice a year only—viz., at the Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles. Boys remain till they can read the Hebrew characters with tolerable readiness—that is to say, up to seven or eight years of age. Girls stop a year or two longer; for here their Hebrew education terminates. The scale of payment is low, and does not exceed two shillings a month. Children of all classes are admissible,—the richest merchant sending his daintily nurtured son or daughter to sit side by side with the coarsely-clad child of the artisan. No distinction of rank is recognised. It is as much a matter of course that the upper sections of society should send their tiny representatives to the infant school, as it is

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\* Ethics of the Fathers, chap. 5.

† The two great divisions of the Talmud.

with the lowest to make a strenuous effort to provide the monthly fee for tuition. In the case of parents who can pay nothing, there is a "Society for Learning the Law," which furnishes education free of charge in a building set apart for the purpose. This, however, is regarded with so little favour that the poorest fathers, who themselves may be walking in rags and sleeping on foul straw, will in most cases contrive to scrape together the master's fee, so that their children may be educated with decency among their betters. Even when boys have reached an age when they can be made serviceable on the workman's bench or in the fields, so great is the anxiety about completing the prescribed course of education, that the welcome gain is often foregone for years, in order that the son may win a reputation for proficiency in the Talmud. In this way it comes to pass that many a watch-maker's journeyman may possess as much Rabbinical learning as the banker, whose plate and jewels are the envy of the town.

The infant school is invariably kept by a master who is approved by the assistant Rabbis of the synagogue. He is usually a grave and fatherly man, more highly famed for his virtues than for his intellectual acquirements. Women bear no part whatever in the work of education.

As the number of children in an average-sized infant school ranges from about eighty to one hundred, the master is obliged to avail himself of the services of pupil-teachers or assistants. They are usually lads or young men—a preference being given to orphans and strangers—(always provided that their character will bear inspection) many of them being fugitives from military conscription. They receive no direct payment for their services from the master, but connexion with his establishment ensures a decent provision, and often a good deal more. Matters are managed in this way: Jacob, the pupil-teacher, has ten children under his special charge—the son of a Rabbi, the son and daughter of a banker, and so on. It is part of his duty to go round to their respective houses in the early morning to teach them the Rabbinical way of washing, and to see that it is properly done. That is to say, he has to fetch a jug of water and teach his little pupil to pour it first on his right hand, then on his left, repeating the process three times. This done, he must take care that the morning prayers are properly said. There is no such thing as skipping the ceremony, for until Jacob has arrived the child who is his especial charge dare not leave his sleeping-room or taste any food. The chances are that Jacob will find him asleep in bed, and will arouse him by a tweak of the ear. Each of the fathers, whose children are thus visited, are bound to invite Jacob to board and lodge with them for one day and night in every seven, and in making

his arrangements it is natural enough that the state of the larder and the coziness of sleeping accommodation should enter into the poor pupil-teacher's calculation. He selects accordingly, and it is usually his own fault if he does not fare well. But this is not all. In addition to getting bed and board for nothing, he is entitled to a payment from the parents. It may not in any case be very large; but it is usually sufficient to enable him to dress well—with the aid of his patron's cast-off clothes—and to lay by two or three hundred florins against his wedding day. Thus, then, the same Jacob who stole into the town as a foot-sore tramp to avoid the relentless conscription—for he, poor fellow, shares the hatred of his people to soldiering under any king but one of his own race—may in the course of two or three years have arrived at an established position, and may have won the hand of his richest pupil's sister. There is no nation upon earth among whom romantic marriages—right-down love affairs of the most approved novelist type—are more common than with the prosaic, keen-witted, far-seeing sons and daughters of Israel.

Amongst the assistant masters one is known as "the little teacher." To him pertains the duty of fetching to school such children as may be too young to be safely trusted by themselves, or whose tastes may be suspected to lie in the direction of an outdoor romp with congenial youngsters. This last is, in Israelitish eyes, an offence of dire enormity. If there is one thing above another which is ceaselessly dinned into a child's ears, it is the necessity of preserving a grave exterior. No wonder that we encounter so many old-looking Jews who have scarcely as yet touched the line of mid-life, when childhood has been spent in the repression of every natural outburst of emotion! Jewish children, as a rule, are easily managed. Obedience seems to be spontaneous and requires little forcing. Now and then, however, the neighbourhood may be enlivened by the despairing shrieks of some tiny pupil who refuses to move an inch beyond the fascinating door of a gaudy toy-shop, and who is being fairly dragged along the pavement by a hot and excited "little teacher." The operation is pretty sure to be enlivened by an occasional cuff or slap, with a running accompaniment of expressions that scarcely sound Talmudical. In cold and rainy weather "the little teacher's" duties are further varied by his having to go round to the pupils' houses to collect their dinners.

The school is held in the master's house, and is, in every sense, a private establishment, for when he has secured the approval of the Assistant Rabbis of the Synagogue, he may commence work as soon as he pleases—without interference or inspection—always provided, of course, that its recognised plan



of instruction is known to be observed. On this point the orthodox community is inexorable. It might be disposed to wink at a good many shortcomings, but on the smallest deflection from Rabbinical usage, never !

While Christian schools of all descriptions are strictly under the control of the state, the Hebrew system of education is allowed to hold on its way without hindrance. Every now and then, indeed, a police visit may unexpectedly be made to some establishment against which an informer may bear a grudge, but the little difficulty soon blows over, and master and pupils are soon found in their old places again.

In towns of the size of Warsaw—let us say—which are populous enough to boast of a large Jewish quarter, Government considerably establishes one of its elementary schools in the very thick of the Hebrew community. Attendance is without charge, and, theoretically, it is also compulsory. Every provision is made for meeting the religious requirements of the young scholars. A Jew of distinction is placed at the head of the establishment, and everything is done to allure. But there is one drawback—and that a fatal one. The scheme of education includes German and the hated Polish. This latter tongue is so detestable in the ears of the orthodox that not all the advantages of free and liberal instruction will tempt them to send their children. The prejudice, it is true, has been gradually wearing away for years, and the Government Infant School can now boast of a tolerable sprinkling of Jewish pupils ; but fathers may still be reckoned by the thousand who would prefer death itself to the pollution which is implied in secular learning.

The course of instruction prescribed for the Infant School is simple and invariable. The child is taught to read the Hebrew characters out of a primer. That is all—or nearly all, for towards the end of his stay he may be allowed to spell out a little of Genesis ; but always without a word of comment. The teacher translates the Hebrew into the Jewish-German, which is the common language of communication between Israelites throughout the world. Prayers are never read in the school, neither are hymns sung. Secular learning of all kinds is unknown, and the hours of attendance are worn away in a ceaseless round of Hebrew Alphabet and spelling.

Let us peep into one of these schools, kept by the venerable Jochanan ben Samuel. There is nothing to mark off his establishment from other private houses in a well-to-do looking street—nothing, that is to say, but a confused hum of childish voices, mingled with a dull wail, or a sharp cry of pain, which lead us unerringly to the seat of youthful learning. Jochanan is held on

all sides to be very pious, but he is certainly likewise very grim. Not satisfied with a beard of Aaronic length, he has carefully cultivated the side hair of his head to the long peaks which are so sure a sign of sanctity. It is a pity that he could not have put his eyes straight at the same time, for he has a most hideous squint. At the moment of our entrance he is seated sideways at a long table, with half-a-dozen of the larger children standing near him. We arrive just in time to see him pull the ears of an offending urchin, while he adroitly kicks the shins of another, without appearing in the least to notice him. An instantaneous howl is the result, swelling the chorus of sundry weepers sprinkled about the room, who are rubbing their bruises and lifting up their voices in dismal lamentation.

One of Jochanan's cardinal virtues is said to consist in the fact that he has never so far forgotten the proprieties as to be betrayed into a smile. A less promising subject for levity it would indeed be difficult to imagine; but he certainly knows how to kick and pinch.

The teaching is all done in one room, which is capable of seating from eighty to a hundred children. The furniture is simple enough—a big stove, a long table, three or four chairs for Jochanan and his assistants, long boards resting on stones or bricks and ranged along the walls, which do duty as forms, and, last of all, a barrel of water in the corner with a tin mug attached, for any thirsty disciple to slake his thirst. That is all—and when a few ragged primers, and a well-thumbed copy or two of Genesis are added, the equipment of the schoolroom is complete. The room is close and fusty, and to one accustomed to the proprieties of an English school there is an unpleasant blending of drawling lessons and peevish wailing—but nobody seems to pay any special attention to the noise. One thing alone is strongly repressed—and that is laughter. A child may be restless, or cross, or idle—he may sulk or pout—nay more, he may let his griefs forth in a long and steady howl—but he must not smile. Jochanan would be down upon him in an instant. The result is soon told. If the children are not turned into promising young hypocrites they straightway become miniatures of their parents—careworn, anxious, eager and watchful. Of all the sad sights it was ever our lot to look upon the saddest was a row of infant faces in that Jewish school, not one of which had ever learned to smile.

And what do fathers and mothers say to it all? Why, as repression seems to be as much the order of domestic life as it is of school routine, it is to be presumed that they are content to have it so. Nay, more, so great is their confidence in the virtues of the saintly Jochanan, that when his kicks and pinches fail to pro-

duce wholesome effect they allow their hapless children to pass the night beneath his roof. A couple of chairs are set out, on which some pillows brought from home are arranged, and on these the offending urchin of five or six is compelled to sleep. He need never want a "bogey" so long as Jochanan is moving about the house.

Girls, as has been already said, go no further than the Infant School; here their Hebrew education stops. Whatever more—and it is not much—that has to be learnt, must be picked up at home.

Boys, however, between the ages of eight and thirteen, are expected to attend a Talmud school, the scale of payment at which ranges from six to nine shillings a month. The number of pupils seldom exceeds twenty. The master, who is dignified by the title of Rabbi, thus far resembles his brother of the infant school that, in contravention of law and order, he holds no government certificate of character and fitness—but, unlike the infant schoolmaster he is invariably a man of some mark in the town, distinguished quite as much for learning as for sobriety of demeanour.

He employs one assistant only, whose duty it is, amongst other things, to go round every morning to the houses of the pupils and see that washing and prayers are conducted according to rule. One can never look either at these men or their young charges without a regret that soap should not be included amongst Rabbinical institutions.

An establishment of this kind is known by the name of

#### GEMARA SCHOOL

from that particular part of the Talmud being taught in it. The course of study comprehends nothing but what bears a distinctly religious character. On his first entrance the boy begins to read the Pentateuch and Prophets with the help of a standard commentary. A little further on he is promoted to easy pieces of the Talmud, and is taught to write Rabbinical characters, which differ widely from pure Hebrew ones.

If we peep into the school we shall see the pupils seated on either side of the table—the Rabbi taking the head and his assistant the bottom. It would be a violation of Rabbinical order for the master to sit on a higher level than his pupils, and in a school of this class the boys are not expected to stand, even when repeating their lessons. The room itself has a bare and unfurnished look, and there is no water-cask in the corner. The scholars swing backwards and forwards when they read aloud in a wearisome sing-song chant, but when the master is questioning them they sit perfectly still. Woe be to them if they do not! for close at his hand lies a whip with some six or seven thongs, with which



he most ingeniously flicks the faces, ears, shoulders, and knuckles of inattentive pupils. There is no such thing as dodging his cuts, he judges distance to a nicety, and generally manages to hit on a new place. By way of variety he now and then kicks out under the table, or suddenly slips off his shoe and hurls it at the head of the offender. If actual damage is seldom done by these eccentricities of discipline, an immense deal of petty cruelty is inflicted. It is needless to say that school is devoutly hated, and that boys often run away.

It has been said that sacred subjects alone are taught, but a single exception is made in favour of the first four rules of arithmetic—that is all; history, geography, modern languages, and the rest are steadily ignored, and if the Israelitish lad desires to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he had better contrive to do it in secret, or the Rabbi's whip will descend upon his shoulders in earnest.

Prayers are not read in school, although they are learnt by the pupils, and their meaning is explained. Every pupil is bound to be present at the synagogue service morning and evening. If the Rabbi has any reasonable doubt about their attendance with their father, he insists upon their going with himself. In this way boys come to hate synagogue nearly as badly as school. Hours for study are so arranged as to admit of this attendance. A fair time is allowed for breakfast after the conclusion of the morning service, and if the pupil does not then make his appearance, he had better keep his eye on the whip. There is no fixed hour for leaving school in the morning, but it is never before one, and in all cases the pupils must remain till lessons have been properly said. In the afternoon a moderate time is given for dinner, according to distance from home, and the school generally closes a little before the hour for evening synagogue.

On Sabbaths and Feasts no school is held; the first of the month is also a half-holiday to all, that is to say, except indifferent characters, who are compelled to remain in the school-room, though no lessons are taught. This, however, is not very severely felt, for as the highest Israelitish excitement seems to culminate in a walk, and as Jewish boys have no games, except a mild game of pitch-and-toss for walnuts or sugar-plums, it makes little difference to them whether they are lounging over the school-stove during a half-holiday, or are droning along the streets by the side of an elder who discourses by turns of Talmud and florins.

But the unbroken dreariness of a school-week—synagogue and Talmud, Talmud and synagogue—whips and pinches, pinches and whips—may be said to be summed up and completed in a Sabbath observance, which has the special merit of causing the youthful

Israelite to taste all his bitterness anew. The synagogue service is hardly over before the master of his school makes his appearance and accompanies him to the house of some friend who is named by the father. All the way along the master dins into his ears knotty points of Talmud lessons that have been puzzled over during the week, for the boy is about to be catechised in his school-work by his father's friend. The master feels his reputation to be at stake, and the friend in question is flattered at having been selected, and wants to show off his learning: so between the two the hapless pupil has a rather sorry time of it on his Sabbath morning. Let his answers be up to the mark, and he is dismissed with a pocketful of nuts, or a small piece of silver, but let him falter or come to a stand-still, and sour are the looks of his questioner, as he cautions him to use more diligence during the coming week. The failure of a pupil is in reality the master's own discomfiture, and this the boy is rapidly made to feel, for hardly have the crest-fallen pair slunk out of the room than two or three stinging slaps on the face send the scholar howling to his home.

Somewhere about the age of thirteen the boy will be removed, unless he turns out exceptionally dunce-like, to an

#### UPPER GEMARA SCHOOL,

where he will remain till eighteen. This school is always kept either by an assistant chief Rabbi, or by a man who has earned a considerable local reputation for learning. The number of pupils will probably range from four to ten, or even a dozen, while payment varies from ten to eighteen shillings a month. Rich people may probably pay a trifle more for the sake of securing extra attention to their sons. The hours of attendance and the general routine are very much the same as in the last school, except that no striking is allowed. Unruly boys are reasoned with, and made to feel their own responsibility. More is the pity that this had not been tried a little earlier! The Sabbath examination also is dispensed with, unless the father himself should chance to be a man of learning, in which case he may have a fancy for putting his son through his Talmud "facings."

As to the course of study, everything is made to turn on the Talmud and its commentaries, and, with the exception of the four elementary rules of arithmetic already mentioned, no approach to secular learning is encouraged. It is Talmud from morning to night, varied only by the study of Rabbinical laws, the writing of Hebrew characters, and the recurrence of synagogue services. Anything else that the lad may desire to learn must be picked up on the sly, in the privacy of his bedchamber, and—if his father happen to be proud of his orthodoxy—without a suspicion of Gentile abominations being concealed beneath his roof.

At this point the education of a young man who may be intended for the lower branches of trade, is supposed to be complete. Those, however, who have parents that are able and willing to push their studies further, are immediately entered as students of the

#### BETH-MEDRASH,

the literal meaning of which is "the house of learning." The word "learning," it should be remembered, is invariably limited by strict Jews to the Talmud, and what pertains to its interpretation; so that, in crossing the threshold of the Beth-Medrash, the student is still running in the same groove in which he has all along been moving. He must not swerve an inch to right or left from the well-worn channel of Rabbinical tradition.\*

But what is this Beth-Medrash? In outward appearance it differs little or nothing from an ordinary dwelling-house of the better class, but inside it is fitted up like a synagogue, with ark, scrolls of the law, veil, platform and reading-desk for the Rabbis, and so on. It differs from the synagogue arrangements, however, in having a long table, candlesticks, and all conveniences for study; while the walls (except the part occupied by the ark) are lined with books. Inspection shows that the volumes all relate to sacred subjects, and many of them are of great antiquity. If it is an old-established house there are sure to be from ten to twelve copies of the Talmud, and the same number of the Medrash; all kind of commentaries on the Scriptures, as well as the works of Maimonides, Aberbenel, and all the greatest Rabbis. Secular learning, however, is sure to be wholly unrepresented.

Public prayers are said, just as in the synagogue, but marriages cannot be solemnised in it, for no woman is allowed to enter the door under any pretence whatever, and the congregation is limited to the students of the house. All others would find themselves strangely out of place, and as their appearance would expose them to the ridicule against which no Jew is proof, they prudently keep away.

The Beth-Medrash is not the property of private individuals, like the schools which have already come under notice, but belongs to the entire Hebrew community. In a large city there will probably be seven or eight of these establishments; but in every town where there is a synagogue there is sure to be at least one. The British dominions and France seem to be exceptions to the rule, for in these the Beth-Medrash is hardly known.

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\* By the word Medrash is meant the commentary on the Old Testament Scriptures, which was begun nobody can exactly say when, but compiled and arranged by Rabbi Judah the prince, shortly after the Captivity. It is unspeakably sacred in the eyes of orthodox Jews.



There are no professors or masters, but two or three subordinate officials keep the place in order, and look after the books. It is a boast, which appears to be founded on fact, that the doors are never locked by day or night. You may enter at what hour you will.

What, then, constitutes a student?

There is no matriculation; there is no inquiry about social rank or standing, and, above all, there are no fees. The Beth-Medrash opens its doors to any one who bears a decent character for orthodoxy and morals. Such an one is free to come in when he pleases, and to stay as long as his inclination lasts. All the books are at his disposal, and for any damage that may occur in the course of fair reading he will not be called to account. No further demand is made upon him than that he should be studious and grave. In the latter particular he will be unlikely to offend, for as every spark of youthful emotion will have been extinguished within him during school-days, he will have little temptation to blow the dead embers into new life in the midst of an assembly who would meet the first effort with scorn.

The single exception in the year, when the Beth-Medrash goes stark staring mad with excitement, is the Feast of Purim. As the month Adar comes round—on the 13th day of which the great festival falls—a huge wine-flask and glass are chalked on the inside panel of every door in the Beth-Medrash, with the legend underneath.

“When Adar enters one multiplies joy.”

The multiplication of joy in this case consists in getting extremely drunk, and is effected by the private introduction of bottles of spirits—the books, however, remaining open, and an air of gravity being still preserved, even amidst the fumes of gnass and vodka. But no sooner has the actual day of Purim arrived, than all pretence of sobriety is thrown aside. Rabbinical precepts of the sublimest orthodoxy require the entire community to get raving drunk. It is not merely allowed, but prescribed; and the Beth-Medrash people, as being specially devoted to the precepts of the sages, set about the work with entire good-will. A gigantic likeness of Haman is drawn upon the floor, and a good deal of merriment is caused by the students jumping on it in their frenzy, and running out for dirt with which to pelt it—uttering all the while discordant shrieks of mockery. Mordecai is also drawn, and becomes the object of such laudation as their fuddled brains can devise. By-and-bye, when the assembly is too far gone to distinguish Haman from Mordecai, the revelry reaches its height. Everybody begins to dance like men possessed. Books are torn,

benches broken, candlesticks overturned, while those who have not yet tottered to a corner to sleep away the debauch, fall upon one another's neck, alternately laughing and weeping in the wildness of their convulsive joy.

Once again, every year, are these orgies repeated ; this time, however, not within the walls of the Beth-Medrash itself, but in the house of some rich member of the society, who considers himself highly favoured by his residence being selected as the scene of his fellow-students' conviviality. It looks creditable to receive so many learned and pious men under one's roof, even if they come merely to get drunk. The gathering takes place on the festival which is known by the name of Simkhath Torah, "the Rejoicing of the Law." Each member of the Beth-Medrash puts down a sum agreed upon—say ten shillings—with which the materials of a banquet are provided. The master of the house generally takes upon himself the supply of drinkables, which are chiefly "mead," a highly intoxicating decoction of honey and hops, and wine. No women are allowed to be present, not even the wife and daughters of the host, a restriction which can hardly be blamed when it is borne in mind that everybody makes it a point of duty to get as drunk as possible, and that even the gravest Rabbis may be seen hopping round the room with skirts tucked up, or beslaving a favourite pupil in the effort to impart the kiss of peace.

It would fall far below the truth to imagine that a keen-sighted race like the Jews would deliver their children over to a course of education which shuts out all secular learning, if it did not at the same time open up advantages of a more immediate kind than those which are assigned to the Talmud student in a future life. Here, as elsewhere, orthodoxy and worldly gain walk amicably side by side. A parent, let us say, is poor ; but he determines to strain a point—and often a good many points—to give his son the full benefit of a Talmudical education. At the time, then, when he ought to be earning his living as a clerk, he is dawdling among the Rabbis in the Beth-Medrash. But a character for regularity and steadiness in "the house of learning" is, in reality, worth double the salary which he would have earned elsewhere, for it is his own fault if he does not make a good match. The Beth-Medrash is the best possible introduction to religious circles of the highest order, and as an orthodox father would prefer giving his daughter in marriage to a poor learned man than to the richest unlettered suitor for her hand, our student may consider his fortune secure, if he only keeps his eye on the main chance. No young curate of a fashionable church ever had such golden opportunities as he.

But in addition to the Beth-Medrash, there are colleges in

Hungary, Moravia, and Bavaria, to which Jews from all the continent resort. Nothing but the Talmud is formally taught, though German and other modern languages are allowed to creep in on the sly. The chief advantage of these colleges seems to lie in the fact that a higher degree of cultivation prevails than in establishments nearer home. Thus, for example, a student from Poland would at once shed his long flowing garments, and appear in the newest Paris fashion. He would also learn many of the amenities of life, which his more rigid relatives at home would denounce as ungodly compliance with Gentile usage. The crowning advantage of all, however, is reserved for Presburg, the chief town of Moravia, the presiding Rabbi of which has received from the Austrian Government the privilege of annually exempting ten young men from military service by his certificate. This is, in reality, worth to each of them 1,000 florins (£100)—the market price of a substitute.

There are also Universities confined to Jews, as at Breslau, Padua, and Lemberg, in Galicia, where secular subjects are taught, together with the Talmud and Jewish science, which last, however are thrust considerably into the back-ground. Students come out with degrees as Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology, and if, late years it seems to have grown into a rule that in most continental cities the chief Rabbi should have a degree tacked on to his name.

This is, in itself, a serious and significant departure from immemorial precedent; but the gravest deflection remains to be told. In large cities, where there is a university, Jews are not only allowed but are encouraged to attend. So seductive is the temptation that each succeeding year sees an increasing number of Israelites pass out in medicine and law, to the horror of the Beth-Medrash, and to the subversion of all received notions of propriety.

Those who have been at the trouble to watch the direction which the reforming movement is taking among the Jews, will scarcely be doubtful as to what the future of these graduates will chance to be.



## CHARLES DICKENS.

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THE time has not yet come in which to pass judgment upon Dickens the writer; we are still too near Dickens the man to attempt that. But seven weeks have now elapsed since he passed quietly away from the midst of us on that too-memorable Thursday afternoon, and though we cannot pretend to weigh his merits as a novelist, to criticize his works, or to analyze his genius, we can still speak of him with a freedom to which a month ago we could not have attained.

How sore a loss he is to "the Victorians" they hardly know as yet. He had grown up with the present generation, and vast though his hold upon them was, it was one which was hardly felt; we had become too much accustomed to it to know what it really was. He had been a great man when we were boys—when he himself was little more than a boy—and so his greatness had ceased to be thought of, and was even hardly appreciated. How many of us ponder daily on the blessings shed upon us by the sun, or on the place which it holds in our system? But if, like the sunlight, the spirit of his noble genius spread itself through all our lives almost without our thinking about it, still it was there, doing its beneficent work. Like the sun it shone upon all classes alike, making all somewhat happier; and, let us hope, making all somewhat better also.

Wonderful indeed was the universality of his empire. Our readers know how the Queen valued his books, and revered his talents; the Prince of Wales, it is within the knowledge of many persons, esteemed Dickens his favourite author; and from the tenants of Windsor and Marlborough House, down, through every grade of society, to the pauper in the workhouse, and the convict in the prison, this sentiment was well-nigh universal. It was so, moreover, without our being aware of it. Many of us used to deny the great man's genius all the time that we were profiting by it, enjoying it, revelling in it. We know how the *Saturday Review*, at one period of its history, undertook to write him down. The worthy gentlemen who distil vinegar for the benefit of society in the pages of that estimable journal, did their best to show us



CHARLES DICKENS.





that Charles Dickens was little better than a quack and an impostor. Their assaults upon the author of *Pickwick* were continued with more or less success for a considerable length of time, until it occurred to somebody to see how many times those numbers of the *Saturday*, in which Dickens was assailed, had been indebted for able illustrations of their sentiments to Dickens's writings. The calculation was made, and the result, which was duly published, was such that, in very shame, the *Review* from that day ceased its attacks upon the great man's fame. Everywhere it was the same. That wonderful gallery of portraits, that marvellous collection of wise and witty and gentle sayings, these irresistible and mirth-provoking episodes of his earlier works, and, not less than these, those tender bits of pathos which some of us used to speak of with a sneer—were they not all part of our own lives and histories, as much almost as any of the events which, if our biographies were to be written, would be duly chronicled when we too were laid to rest? Sadly the present writer, who admits that like many other men he did not value Dickens as he ought to have done whilst he knew him in the flesh, recalls a time in his own history, when for many weeks he never retired to rest without thinking of that nightly procession of David Copperfield and his girl wife, and Jip, and Miss Trotwood, to the bedroom where, all too soon, Dora passed away. The writer never thought about Dickens himself during those dark days; but he thought nightly of David and Dora, nightly felt that his own feelings and his own experiences had been painted years before in *Copperfield*. Now, the artist is no longer hidden by the greatness of his work. The very eclipse of death has revealed his greatness.

On a shelf, close to where we write, stand in their accustomed places Dickens's books. There they are, leading off the goodly muster of "the Victorians" who are gathered beside them—Thackeray, and Evans, Tennyson, the Brownings, Carlyle. As a mere matter of duty, and recollecting all that has been written in the great man's praise during the last seven weeks, and all that was written to depreciate him for seven and twenty years before, we have been asking ourselves: What books out of that slender collection would we place before the works of Dickens? It has been a hard struggle to decide, and the decision is one which will not be popular with many. Nevertheless, let us have *In Memoriam* and *Pendennis* before any other books of the present generation, and after that, let Dickens come first with *David Copperfield* and *Pickwick*. This, however, does not represent the true place of Dickens in the estimation of the world. He comes

before Tennyson, before Thackeray, in the opinion of the majority of readers. The general verdict makes him first and greatest of the Victorians. And certainly he was greater than any of his contemporaries, inasmuch as in one department he had achieved a greatness which we believe to be absolutely unrivalled by any other English author. As a humourist, he came before Shakespeare himself. What greater literary praise could be given to any man? The melancholic dyspeptic temperament which in this latter half of the nineteenth century is common to so many of the members of the middle and upper classes, has more sympathy with such writers as Thackeray and Tennyson than with Dickens, whose pages are full of a superabundant life, a healthy flow of animal spirits. But for that very reason the genius of Dickens was invaluable to the age. It was just what the age needed; it could not have been given to the world at a more appropriate moment; it could not have accomplished a more important work.

We make no attempt to enumerate the greatest of his creations. Why should we do so? They are known to everybody; and to tell the English public what Dickens's principal characters were, would be like instructing a class of curates in the decalogue. All his books are household words; all his characters are our friends or our foes; his greatest characters are something more—they are, let who will deny it, amongst the most splendid creations of English genius. The genius shows itself in a grotesque form it is true; but is it more grotesque than Falstaff? Is it nearly as grotesque as Rabelais? And speaking of Rabelais, let us be thankful that a humourist who was more humorous than Rabelais himself, should have written ten thousand pages in which there is not one line or one word which the most rigid moralist would desire to see erased. This fact alone is a standing wonder, and a standing glory.

We know not what view posterity will take of Charles Dickens. Yet we believe that he will be looked back upon as foremost amongst the great novelists of this age of novel-writers. We venture to think, indeed, that the day will never come whilst the English language is spoken in which *Waverley* and *Pickwick* will cease to command their circle of readers:—and who would not rather have written *Pickwick* than *Waverley*?

Why should we trouble ourselves with the judgment of posterity, however? We have lost one who was more a part of our own lives, who entered more into our thoughts, did more to mould our familiar phrases and modes of speech, than any English writer since the days of Shakespeare. How greatly we

shall miss him we cannot yet discern. Only as the years go by, and no more Sam Wellers, or Pecksniffs, or Joe Gargerys, or Mr. Biffins, come forth from his brain to enchant and delight us, will we feel how great our loss has been. The splendid series of portraits is at an end. The hand of the master, who never failed when he tried to move to laughter or to tears, is idle now for ever; the "mystery" of his latest book is merged in that greater mystery which it has been his fate to penetrate a little earlier than we who are left, and as we leave him, thankfully and silently, to his rest in his glorious grave, all we can say of him by way of epitaph is that he was the greatest king of hearts England has known since Shakespeare died.



## A CHILDISH WISH VERSIFIED.\*

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DEAR friend, since last I saw your face  
 So very long it seems,  
 I fear I soon shall scarcely trace  
 Your features in my dreams.

I know the eyes were very bright,  
 The mouth both kind and gay,  
 The hair as dark as is the night  
 Touched by a moonlight ray.

And this is all—but true and clear,  
 Your kind indulgent tone  
 Seems falling on my listening ear,  
 When I am all alone.

And then I wish, with whisper low,  
 But, oh! how earnestly,  
 That all the pleasures I can know  
 My lot in life may be.

Sunshine and flowers, the song of birds,  
 The music of church bells,  
 And that which in the poet's words,  
 Of thought melodious tells.

A home which peace and love unite,  
 To sanctify and bless,  
 And more than I can think or write,  
 Or know of happiness.

\* The wish or letter thus versified, was the wish of a child in spirit rather than in years, who remained but as an innocent child till the day of her death. The peculiar tastes, feelings, loves, and pleasures are literally rendered of one in whom the instincts of genius were by a sad infirmity rendered effete.

## THE PRICE OF PEACE.

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WE are getting back into our Fool's Paradise again. The wiseacres at the head of affairs, the sheep who lead the lions, are beginning to mutter that they were not so very much in the wrong after all. War still likely? Nothing of the kind. The storm has spent its fury,—it has passed us by altogether. That another storm should ever arise is utterly impossible. Thus we read that the Government has been induced by recent events on the Continent to stop the further purchase of horses for the cavalry and artillery. Still, for all our holloaing, we are not quite out of the wood.

We are on very good terms with Germany, no doubt; only, the Germans may not be on quite such good terms with us. They have not yet forgotten a certain little discussion regarding contraband of war. Suppose for a moment that the united Fatherland were to cast a hungry eye at Belgium. This is not a probable contingency—no contingency is, till it be a thing of the past; but, for all that, it is on the cards. We reckon upon the forbearance of Bismarck, but after all, we have no guarantee that the astute minister is as single-minded as he represents himself. To judge from the past, a few weeks makes all the difference. What if, as may happen even yet, a defeated army be driven back upon neutral ground? What if Prussia continue victorious, and, not content with Alsace and the expenses of the war, resolve upon dismembering France? Are we to allow her to do so? What if, in the not very remote future, a question arise as to the reconstruction of Poland? Russia will hardly stand by and see her neighbour overrun Europe, the two good friends may quarrel, the idea above suggested may be mooted at Berlin, and then what will happen? Will Russia crush Prussia, or *vice versa*? In any case, may we not be dragged into the quarrel? What may Austria do within the next year or two? What Italy?—or France? It is all very well to say that we have no concern with the affairs of these nations; but neither had we with those of Spain,—and yet the question of candidature to its vacant throne suddenly led to a war from which we have had a narrow escape.†

When the whole of Europe is in a blaze, it is not easy for England to keep clear of the sparks. Should Bismarck annex Alsace and Lorraine, will our volatile neighbours, as we call them, be resigned to the proceeding for evermore? Suppose, having no very grateful sense of the abuse lavished upon them by their old ally, they should purchase the assistance of Russia by means of the road to Constantinople? What, again, if Russia were to carry out her threat of marching into the Principalities? What if France and Spain were to form a gigantic republic—if the democratic mania were once more to spread over Europe? What if jealousy were to promote a gigantic contest between the Teutonic and the Slavonic races? What if either or both were to form a crusade against the Latins? What if the Germans were again to make an irruption into Italy? What if the long smouldering quarrel with America should burst into flame? What if one of a thousand things not unlikely to happen, were really to happen? Should we stand by and twiddle our thumbs? Yet none of the contingencies to which we have alluded are very remote; and a trifling mishap, no worse than the Hohenzollern candidature, might plunge the whole of Europe into a war. What, too, about Gibraltar? But it is an unwelcome task enumerating contingencies against which we blind ourselves, and for none of which are we prepared in the least.

People in this country seem to think that England bears a charmed life. We have never been invaded yet; therefore, we shall never be invaded in the future. The French thought it an easy job to get to Berlin,—they could not realize for a moment the possibility of the Germans getting to Paris. When war comes,—and, in sober truth, it may come any day,—vapouring, and sham statistics will not save us. It will be no use saying at the critical moment, truly or falsely, that there are 300,000 breech-loaders in store; that by this time<sup>of</sup> next year, or the year after, we shall have things on a satisfactory footing. Our enemies are not the fools we take them for; they are up and at work, while we are still dozing; they will not give us time just when we want it, we may be sure of that.

The mere fact of the leading newspaper choosing to talk nonsense, will not save us in the hour of peril. Mr. Cardwell, playing with edged tools, may nauseate the House of Commons with “cram,” but the assurances of clerks, however bare-faced and facetious, will not stand us instead of guns and ammunition. In point of fact, if any serious complications were to arise, the fate of the Gladstone Ministry would be that of the Ollivier Cabinet—instantaneous collapse. We should recognize our folly when it was too late. The men of action would take the



place of the men of ignorance and obstinacy, when the mischief was beyond repair. We have no special immunity from invasion. We are safe if we take ordinary precautions and make ordinary sacrifices; but Providence will not cause the hearts of men to undergo a radical change merely to suit the whims of a Radical Ministry. Nations, like individuals, are greedy, and aggressive, and unscrupulous; they have been so from time immemorial, and, unless the millennium come, they will be so till the crack of doom. The ass may lie down by the lion, the lamb may crouch by the wolf, but each must be prepared to take the consequences of their rashness. They may say, "Good Mr. Lion, or good Mr. Wolf, I am sure you are the most amiable creature breathing;" but the greedy monster, whose interests are not exactly identical with theirs, may gobble them up all the same. It does not follow that we are sure of peace merely because we say we do not wish for war. We may be resigned to a good deal of kicking, but there is a certain limit to endurance beyond which even the worm must turn. A little boy who says to *all* other little boys, "I would not fight for the world," offers an inducement to his schoolfellows to give him a thrashing. If we want peace we must pay for it, and we cannot gain our object merely by sacrificing dignity. There is no need for us to play the bully, but if we want people to leave us alone, we must show that we are not to be attacked with impunity. Twopence extra in the income tax, unwillingly paid, will not work miracles. We seem to think that if the worst comes to the worst, we have only to deal out a handful of coppers to be safe: but we ought to be spending money now. When the enemy has landed on our coast, even that dreaded extra twopence will be lavished in vain. "Too late! too late!" will be the cry; and the parable of the foolish virgins may be set before us in a slightly altered form.

"A stitch in time saves nine;" it is no good trying to insure our house when it is burning over our heads. We pay for worship in the eyes of good society, we pay for the satisfaction of cutting a better figure than our neighbours, we pay away conscience and health to be esteemed materially or mentally a little better off than the common herd, why should we grudge paying hard cash and personal comfort for the national honour, for national safety?

We have very inadequate notions of the danger in which we stand. We have very inadequate notions of the measures that we must take to guarantee the inviolability of our country. We have been stupefied by the doctrine of self-interest. The theory of every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost has been preached so industriously and loudly for years past that we are unable to see its fallacy; we have adopted it as an article of the national

creed, and are rather inclined to boast of it. We will have nothing to do with anybody, we will cast all sense of shame and honour to the winds, we will recognize neither obligations nor duties, we will ignore past favours and present insults, we will withdraw ourselves from the great community of nations, we will sit on our money-bags and drivel. If anyone speak to us of dignity and self-respect we will stare in his face and smile contemptuously. We will give other people plenty of that cheap commodity—advice, especially when they do not want it and we can do so without risk to ourselves, we will bluster with the full intention of drawing in our horns directly our adversary knits his brows, and as soon as there are any signs of danger we will run away and hide ourselves, trusting to be able by and bye to curry favour with the victorious party. We will have all take and no give. We will treat the rest of the world like fools; but if they consult their own interests instead of ours, as they will probably do, we will whimper like a parcel of school-girls, go down on our knees, and try to disarm their wrath by abject self-humiliation.

But, thank God! the British nation is not quite unmanned. Let us send to the right-about those milk-and-water politicians, whose war-cry, as we have seen it observed, is “Peace at any price,” whose aim is simply to fill their pockets and to make us contemptible in the eyes of Europe. Let us be alive; these are no days for pusillanimity and cloudy theorizings. Let us deal with the world as it is, and not as we fancy it ought to be. Let us present a firm front to the half-uttered menaces of greedy adventurers, of rowdies who call themselves kings, emperors, or presidents of republics. Whining and blustering and lying will not make matters any better. Let us have the courage to face facts; do not let us deceive ourselves by imagining all must be well simply because the *Times* or the most incompetent War Minister we have ever had choose to tell us so. Let us recognize the fact that we have duties to perform as well as privileges to enjoy. We ought to be proud to make sacrifices for a country that has done so much for us. We ought to say, “Dear old England! we will not let you be bullied, you shall not be at the mercy of anyone who chooses to spit in your face and pull you by the nose; we are your children, and though we have been suffering for a good many years past from a fit of selfish indolence, we are ready to do a good deal more for you even than pay twopence extra in the income tax.”

How melancholy it is, in the present crisis, in the face of a thousand complications even yet brewing, that the safety of the nation should be entrusted to a man who may be conscientious but whose leading characteristics are vacillation and rashness. We see the management of our army entrusted to a bungler who tries to

choke off inquiry with statements that, true on the face of them, are false in spirit; who congratulates us on having 300,000 breech-loaders in store, and then admits that two-thirds of the number are in Canada. Mr. Childers may or may not be a very efficient First Lord of the Admiralty in his own estimation, but when breakers are a-head we tremble to see the helm in the grasp of an ex-Australian barrister. The Government is deceiving the people. Measures set on foot to-day are countermanded to-morrow. The same ministry that checks preparations begun all too late, calls itself "Liberal," and has proved the falsity of its own words by driving thousands of the labouring classes—men whom we can ill spare—into exile or the workhouse. Our rulers tell us one set of facts; observation assures us of another. It appears that instead of putting on our arms we are letting them drop from our hands. We have just been awakened with a rude shove, now we are dropping off to sleep again. Poor old England, whom idiots are leading about by a string like a dancing bear!

Let us hear no more of this nonsensical economy, this saving of pennies and wasting of pounds, this thrusting of the burden from those who can pay to those who cannot pay, this bartering our birthright for a mess of red pottage, this straining at gnats and swallowing of camels, this selling of the future for half-pence, this substituting for the interests of the nation those of a clique and vestrydom. We have gained nothing by our past meanness. On the contrary, we have lost. We cut down and cut down, and then on a sudden have to repair and replace at an enormous outlay. We sell the thing we want for a penny, and in a moment of alarm buy a wretched substitute for twopence. We dismiss our veterans, and get raw recruits instead. In our cleverness, we either half do a thing or do it all wrong; we have forts without guns, we supply our soldiers, grudgingly to be sure, with the worst breech-loader extant. We can only half make up our minds. We are so economical that we would not for the world run the risk of committing a mistake. We won't have this and won't have the other because we are not sure but that something better may turn up in course of time. We are like the girl who walked through the poppy field. No flower was good enough for her, she might find a better further on. At last she came to a part of the field where there were no flowers at all. We won't adopt this weapon or the other. When war comes we shall have no weapon at all. It is part of our lamentable policy to cheat our best friends. We enlist soldiers and get all we can out of them, and when peace comes and we think we are safe we turn them adrift at a moment's notice.

I say that we must make up our minds for sacrifices both of cash and comfort. If we can afford to spend money on eating



and drinking and amusements of all sorts, we can afford to do so for the national honour and safety. Let us set to work with a will. Believe me, ye city magnates, ye need not always have dry champagne for dinner instead of turtle soup, be patriotic and lay out the money in shot and shell. You know what Horace says about dying for your country: to spend cash on your country, in other words on the national defences, ought to be equally agreeable. Pennies laid out now will save pounds by-and-bye. It is better to pay twopence extra income tax than to have your house knocked about your ears. You may depend upon it, my fine fellows, that a bad time will come for you, if you persist in your folly. If you *will* be obstinate, and *won't* show common prudence, your enemies and mine—and England has made plenty of powerful enemies within the last few years—will seize the tempting opportunity and kick you soundly and ignominiously in spite of your deplorably beseeching attitude.

We must be prepared for sacrifices of comfort. Let our volunteer army become a reality. Let us make up our minds that we shall have to fight; that we were not<sup>3</sup> enrolled merely to wear a uniform, to attend drill just and only just when we are inclined to do so. It would be well if we were a little more in earnest. With proper management the volunteers<sup>3</sup> could be made an invaluable means of national defence. But the Government is perfectly supine in the matter as might naturally be expected, and own it we must, on their present footing the gallant citizens who skirmish more or less ineffectively at Brighton would be of no real use against an enemy. In the first place we must insist on being properly armed. We are not quite babies, whatever Mr. Cardwell may think, we don't mean to be put off with shams, we want guns not gas-pipes. And what is more we intend to have them. You are stupid and lazy, Mr. Cardwell, yes, but we will agitate and give you no peace till we have gained our object.

Let us suppose, now, that each able-bodied man of us all felt bound in honour to devote three successive years of his life to mastering a soldier's duties, would that be any great hardship? No one is ever the worse for having found out his true physical capacities; no one is ever the worse for having learnt his business thoroughly. In the Volunteers at present there is too much lagging. This won't do. You will tell me, my friend, that it is inconvenient leaving your desk or your chambers so often. Well, then, devote a certain set period to the task that you have taken in hand, and have done with it once for all. Attend for the time being to nothing else. Learn all that you have got to learn, not by fits and starts, but by a year or two's regular soldiering, and then go back to your accounts or your briefs with a clear conscience. You will

have lost no time, or very little; you will be more of a man; you will have learnt to make the most of life, for you will have acquired orderly habits, and you will have learnt how to dispense with many a superfluous luxury that you would else think a necessary; you will have got rid of a good deal of false delicacy, and false pride, and you will have learnt to harbour your resources of all kinds. We ought to have an efficient army of quite a million Volunteers. Then we should be safe—inexpensively safe. Recent events have taught us that a civil population in arms is more than a match for the paid army of the first military nation in Europe. Let it once be known that England expected every man with the full use of his limbs to fight in defence of hearth and home, and no compulsory measures would be necessary. The whole country would rise in arms; and even a Liberal Government would no longer dare to treat the Volunteers as a concourse of incapables.

A word with respect to the “Regulars” and Militia. We want fighting men to command us, not inexperienced young gentlemen or pig-headed old gentlemen. Is it not monstrous that, as has happened, officers of limited means should be obliged to sell out on a regiment being ordered to Dublin—that they should be obliged to sell out, not on the score of incompetency, but by reason of the additional and utterly needless outlay about to be incurred?

Let us cut down the mess-room expenses. Let the Army be a profession, not a haven of idleness and dissipation for fashionable incompetents, eager to wear a red coat. Considering the pay of an English officer, he ought to be able to live on his means and to save. The French tell us that our rate of pay is incredible and magnificent; our Bond Street loungers speak of it as beneath contempt.

Why, it may here be asked, have we no subalterns and a general lack of officers in our Militia? The reply is easy. In the first place, the Militia is treated as a joke; in the second, no man but one of private property can afford the expense. Here again is a disgraceful fact. Balls and picnics are not essential parts of a soldier's experience; simplicity, not profusion, is the best preparation for campaigning; and we ought to regard the Militia as a genuine branch of the service—as a body of men intended to fight, not as dummies or schoolboys in training for the regular army. It will be a woful day for England if ever her reserves are called into the field, and we find that, for the most part, it is the fools who have risen above the surface.

As respects the Volunteers, commissions go abegging. It is a sad discouragement to men who seriously adopt any pursuit to feel that, whatever their merits, they will never be able, unless they make money first, to rise from the ranks.

The *Times* says that rifle practice at the butts ought to become as agreeable an occupation as deer-stalking. This is true. It would at least be a more sensible pursuit than battue shooting. Life in the camp has its hardships, but it has also its attractions. It is an unspeakable satisfaction to a man of real energy to feel that he occupies a definite position; that he is fast becoming a genuine soldier; that, by stern experience, he is mastering the details of an art that are not to be acquired by haphazard. It is only when we pursue a task with flagging energies, or rather with energies which have never really warmed, with half-heartedness, and with a sense of its being more or less a sham, that it proves irksome. Once let a man be sure that he is on the path to distinction, and, if really a man, he will stick to his work, let the disagreeables of his position be what they may.

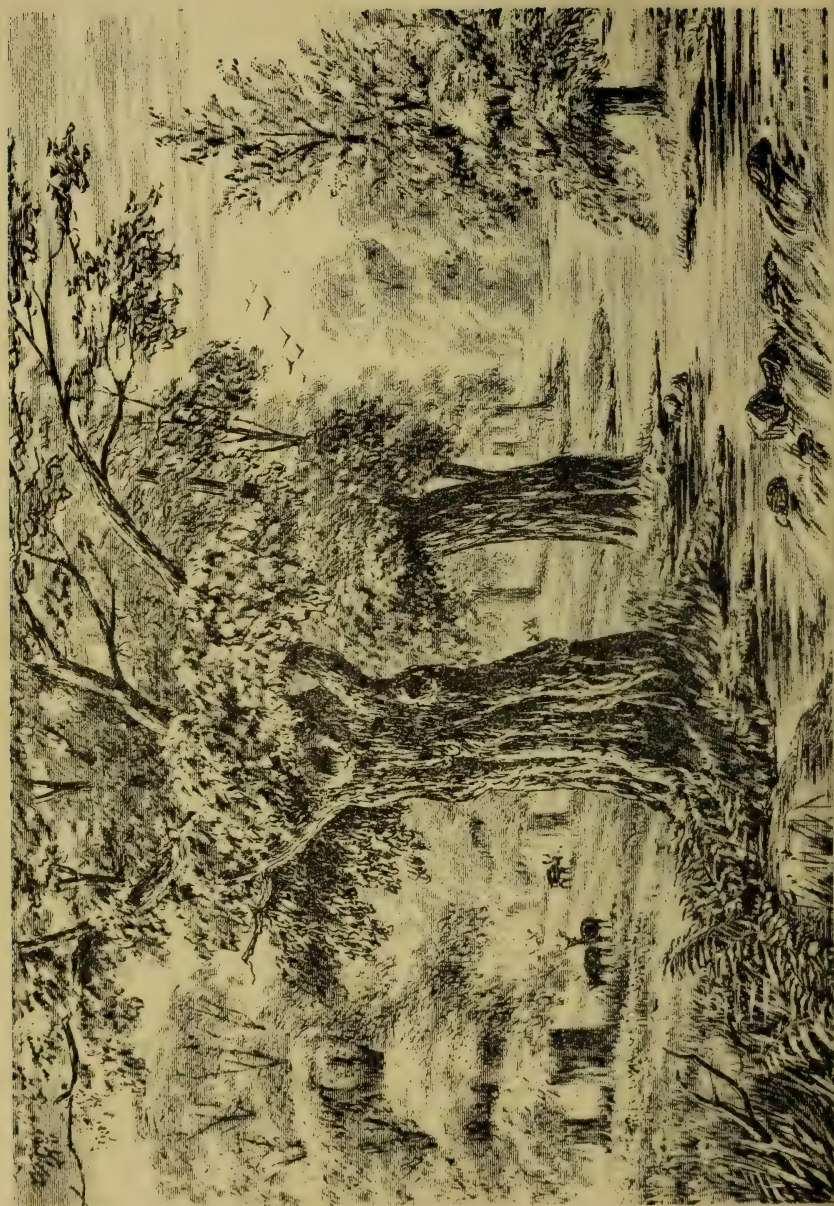
When the Volunteers are properly organised, they will be a barrier to invasion as invincible as any mortal barrier can be. At present—we say it unhesitatingly, and without regard for the vanity that we run the risk of wounding—they are practically worthless.

Our Militia, too, is worthless, our Army is small and badly provided for. Let the Ministry, the Thunderer of Printing House Square, and the advocates of peace at any price, say what they will, we are in a most critical and disgraceful condition.

We have spoken in plain language, and we have denounced the criminal conduct of those incompetent men who have rashly been entrusted with the reins of power. We have spoken of our national defences as they really are; we mean to say something else about them on a future occasion. We mean to speak till we have gained our object; till England has thrown off the incubus of stupidity and red-tapeism that weighs her down; till she has once more asserted and attained that position to which she is entitled amongst the nations of Europe.







## SEPTEMBER.

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OF all the months of the year commend me to September. There are no mornings so sweet as September mornings ; no days so beautiful ; no evenings so lovely.

To my mind this month seems to combine the freshness of the spring, the glory of the summer, and the mellow loveliness of the autumn all in one, in order that it may present to the world a recapitulation of all the beauties of the year ere the warm days have faded away and the shadow of winter has fallen across the land.

It has an advantage over the other months in that its days are neither uncomfortably warm nor uncomfortably cold. It is like a compromise between the summer and the autumn ; too warm for the one, yet too cold for the other. It is a month which possesses unmistakable characteristics ; and I think were I borne away to some desolate place, where I should lose all count of seasons and of time, and were suddenly to be dropped down in Britain again in the month of September, I should recognise its features, and my heart would rejoice.

In this month the harvest is gathered into the barn-yard ; the leaves put on a tinge of yellow and begin to fall ; the birds of passage sing their farewell songs, and prepare to fly southward ; the flowers that decked the mantle of the summer let fall a shower of leaves at every touch ; the landscapes put on more variegated and gorgeous tints ; and all nature seems clothed with a mellow and spiritual beauty which every other month of the year entirely lacks.

I learned to love September when a child : for often in that month, during the harvest weeks, I used to live at a farm-house in the Carse of Gowrie, and here, in that joyous time when the cackle of cocks and hens was to me the sweetest music, and the smell of the hay the divinest perfume, I have spent many a happy September day. I visited the old place this very month, and for some hours seemed to revive my boyish days. It is a sweet quiet spot, situated half way between Dundee and Perth, and on a fertile and level plain, with the Tay and the mountain slopes of Fifeshire to the south, and on the north the long range of hills that



enclose the Carse, and shelter it from the frequent nor'land gales—the very hills which one summer afternoon were crossed by the “Lass o’ Gowrie” of song repute.

It was a beautiful afternoon about the middle of this month when I proceeded by train from Dundee to the station nearest this place. Arrived here, I had two miles of a walk before I reached the farm. It was ten years at least since I last traversed this road, and every new feature in it came back to my memory like the glimpses of a long-forgotten dream. Here were the great oak-trees, under whose shade I used to gather brambles; the burn where many a time I have waded and fished; the smithy, with its blazing fire and its group of gossips, to which it was my highest ambition to ride a shoeless horse; the fields where I used to wander; the sauch trees where I gathered whistle-wood; the orchard, to which I used to steal so often to make a repast on apples and pears, making my friends wonder every meal time at my want of appetite;—each of these well-remembered scenes came back upon my heart with the familiarity of yesterday.

And when I reached the farm itself! there were the out-houses and barns where I used to play when the days were rainy; the lofts I used to ransack for eggs; the old-fashioned circular mill, where I rode when it was in motion, or swung in the harness when it was not; the cocks and hens, many of whom I would have claimed as my old friends of a dozen years ago, had I not been assured that they had been gathered to their fathers, and that these were their posterity of the third and fourth generations,—a fact, I suppose, which accounted in some degree for the remarkable resemblance they bore to the dear departed; the reed which I used to visit with a kind of awe; and the stack-yard “where many a time and oft” I have lain on a half-piled hay-stack in a dreamy, lazy mood, watching the effect of light and shade playing on the far-away Perthshire hills which seemed then to my childish fancy to be the verge of the universe. How I longed to be able to journey to the furthest summit, and, creeping to its extreme edge, gaze over into what ministers are in the habit of calling “the immensity of space!” I have passed them often since, those hills, and have thought, with a sigh, how happy that world was of which they were the boundary and the limit.

But here I am speaking of old times instead of September month; and I am inclined to think that it is one of the peculiar characteristics of this month that its fading glories and its melancholy beauty create a corresponding sadness in the heart of man, and send his mind wandering back to the vanished fairy-land of his youth. It must have been when gazing on a September landscape, that Tennyson penned the lines,

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what ye mean !  
 Tears from the depth of some divine despair,  
 Rise from the heart, and gather in the eyes,  
 When gazing on the happy autumn fields,  
 And thinking of the days that are no more.”

Yes, we may find a beauty and a glory in many things as we grow old, and as the autumn of our life approaches we may discover, even in the commonest objects, a halo of splendour which death itself can never dim ; but all these glories will be touched by the yellow tinge of the fading year, and shrivelled by the breath of the coming winter ; and it is only in the happy spring-time of life that nature wears a loveliness which, to our eyes, can never wither, and a glory that can never pass away. And it does not pass away ! for let a man be steeped to the very lips in care or trouble, while memory remains to show him even, as it were, in panoramic vision, the stainless joys of his youthful years, and the Elysian fields in which he wandered when a boy—that man lives hours of real pleasure of which the world little dreams.

I wish, my reader, you were with me at this moment, where I have been sitting pursuing this train of thought, and endeavouring to frame this simple article, and it would require no words of mine to make you love September. It is the afternoon of the last Sunday in this month, and I am sitting on a little grassy mould which rises abruptly from the summit of one of the cliffs of the Isle of Bute, about two miles from Rothesay. I have one companion with me only ; and as if by tacit and mutual consent we have not spoken a word to each other for half an hour at least, but are both sitting gazing on the lovely scene before us, rapt in our own thoughts. There is not a breath of wind : it is a dead calm. On our left Rothesay is standing mirrored in the motionless waters of its bay. On our right is the little village of Ascog, with its one solitary spire

“Divinely climbing  
 The blue heaven like a prayer !”

whilst before us the Cumbraes are sleeping in sunshine, and, here and there, the little becalmed vessels looked like

“Painted ships  
 Upon a painted sea.”

The Argyleshire bank opposite slopes away in thickly wooded beauty ; the towers of Toward Castle rise indistinctly from among the surrounding trees ; and, struggling vainly to beat out to sea, a few vessels from the Clyde have set every stitch of their snowy canvas, and seem to be waiting impatiently for a breeze. The sun is slowly westering ; and his parting rays fall in showers of glitter-

ing glory, casting over every object an intense but dreamy lustre. Behind us there is a small plantation, and here and there, about our feet, the yellow leaves are lying, reminding us that the summer is over and gone, and that the fall of the year is come.

Despite the exceeding beauty of everything around us, we cannot help instinctively feeling the melancholy of autumn shedding its influence over the spirit ; and I know I am sitting

“ In that strange mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.”

There is something so mysterious in the spell-bound air ; so solemn in the moveless sea ; so weird-like in the blood-red sunset. It almost seems as if one were in a dream—as if “ all things were and were not ! ” Every object has a ghostly and unearthly shape ; the cliffs wear a shadowy and uncertain outline ; the trees loom as if through a cloud of haze ; the mountains seem to mix with cloudland ; and, over the mystic sea

“ The ships seems drifting with the dead  
To shores where all are dumb.”



## A CURIOUS CONCERT.

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It took place in our Corn Exchange, a large room that is a hundred feet long and fifty feet wide. It was curious because the audience, as we looked down upon it from a narrow gallery at one end of the hall, was a bright scarlet mass, and the singers only so many scarlet particles detached from it. In a word, it was a militia concert; and hearers and the chief singers were all militiamen. There was a platform, with a pianoforte upon it, in the centre of one of the long sides of the hall, and round this point the audience sat, in a rough red horse-shoe. As they waited for the commencement of the musical proceedings, their backs looked like rows and rows of scarlet sacks, with small black tufts on the top of them; but at the swing of the entrance doors, or other noise that attracted their attention, the line of bright buttons down their jackets, the bright badges in front of their caps, and varied features below, suddenly came into view with a flash that was quite startling.

There was some delay in starting. The organist of the district church took his seat at the pianoforte, attended by a small train of choral singers of all sizes and ages, that, throughout the evening, remained on the platform, and formed a black choral background for the red-coated solo singers. The officers' wives and daughters, seated in the gallery, whispered and wondered, and whispered and rustled. Some young officers who had hastened from the mess dinner to be present, bent down to hear their murmured surmises. Two curates shared this privilege appreciatingly, and made the most of it. At every swing of the entrance doors, nearly a thousand black-capped heads turned round expectantly, with eyes and buttons sparkling. But no commencement was made. Clearly something was wrong. Could it be that the first tenor had become indisposed at the last minute? or was the first bass, temporarily, under a cloud in the black-hole?

At last the choir stood up, and the pianist struck a few chords and glided through a few arpeggios. "Who would fly from a foe if alone or last?" they sang; "And boast that he was true, as cowards might do, when peril is past," they continued. It was the catching chorus of soldiers from "Faust," chosen, of course,

as appropriate for the occasion. Glory and love, courage, trumpets and swords, formed the weft and the waft of it. And when the singers came to the end,—where was a maiden fair, who was waiting at home after the perils were o'er,—a thousand pairs of regimental contract boots stamped approbation. Then came the hitch again. It was evident the first solo singer was not forthcoming, and the start made in the expectation he would turn up during the progress of the first chorus was not justified by the result. By now the doors swing triumphantly to and fro with the vigorous dash that has been made through them by a party of three; and all eyes turning round once more, there is a great clapping of hands and stamping of feet. One of these three is the missing man.

He is a fair, blue-eyed young stripling, of twenty. Sunburnt and cropped, of course. And he comes round to the front of the platform with a pleasant diffidence that tells he probably acquired his musical skill in some village choir. He has taken off his cap, and stands “eyes front,” and hangs his arms straight down, as though he knows his sergeant is among his hearers, and will require this concession from him. The accompanist plays a few wavering triplets, and then the young militia-man, with a clear, true tenor voice, sings “*Nil desperandum*,” unfalteringly, but modestly. His comrades stamp and clap as though they are five thousand strong; and he retires, snatches his cap from the top of the pianoforte, and is lost in the audience.

Four members of the choir now give a quartette, which, however, partly because it is of a plaintive strain, and rather intricate, is not so much appreciated by the men as the song of their comrade; and they are allowed to quietly reseat themselves. Throughout the evening the pieces they perform are, unfortunately for their military popularity, of a melancholic character, and the militia hold them as feeble. The greeting to the smart young corporal, tall, slim and brown-haired, who succeeds them with a love song, full of assignations to meet him in a *lane*, appears all the more hearty for this indifference. But this cordiality in its turn is lost in the enthusiasm reserved for another blue-eyed private, who sings of the infidelities and general contumacy of “*Naughty Mary Anne*.” There is a dramatic action about this young fellow that shows he has picked up his knowledge in the music hall and not in the village choir. At the end of every verse, in which a fresh piece of Mary Anne’s perfidy has been narrated, he pulls out from his tight pocket a small dirty handkerchief or duster, with which he wipes his eyes in a broken-hearted manner; and after this manifestation of acute distress, he throws his hands out to the audience, and they all take up the tune, and

with measured stamp, apostrophise in chorus the cruelty of the fair one, and confess their sympathy with her "young man." There are several verses; but not half enough to exhaust either their delight or vocal powers; and the ditty would be vociferously encored, but for a circulating understanding that this compliment would protract the concert beyond regulation hours.

Some instrumental pieces on the flute, piccolo, and trombone follow. They are performed by little detachments from the choir, which look like a few busy young crows on a field of poppies holding conferences. The choral background, too, in its full strength, gives a part song or two. And then comes the comic song of the evening, entitled "William Waters, or the original Tailor's Dummy." The representative of the unfortunate Mr. Waters is a short, square, dark little private, who has only to commence his recitative to engage attention as completely as the most majestic basso that ever paced a stage. As he relates how he fell into the hands of the horse dealers, who sold him the steed that was once Napoleon's, and shows the sort of action it required to ride him, and makes his joke about his "bony part," laugh after laugh breaks from the audience, long, loud and straggling, like their own rolls of musketry at an early stage of practice. As he relates his gradual decline in the social scale till he comes down to be a tailor's dummy, and withdraws his arms into his extended sleeves, and makes his knees knock together after the manner of those frail figures, the great audience roars again. When he tells, standing, all the while mimicking his attitude in this capacity, how one looker-on suggested to another to prick him, to settle their uncertainty as to whether he was wax—and he screams as though he was then and there well punctured—there come fresh volleys of laughter. And when he allows his hands to protrude through his sleeves, and his arms to drop by his sides again, and stands upright before he gives his little bow and hurries away, the musketry practice seems making rapid progress.

Then a chair is brought on to the platform, and a short stout militia-man, almost round with his good-natured corpulence, seats himself in it, and accompanies himself on a banjo; cleverly, and in earnest, as though he could get his living by his melodies if other trades failed; as he sometimes does, perhaps, when, in his experience, they sometimes do. But picket time is now close at hand; the audience is slightly restless as he tinkles and lingers over his air; and evidently relieved when "God save the Queen" is struck up.

The exit gives an idea of the sack of a town. As the last note is dying away, just two minutes before every man should be at his billet, the whole audience takes to its legs. Over go the forms



and over go some of the men, but these last are up in a second ; and in less than a minute the place is cleared and still ; whilst the officers' wives and daughters, and their guests, are beginning to stir and rustle in their gentle and slow descent from the gallery : the attendant young officers concentrating every faculty, for the moment, upon the difficulty of not treading upon the trains of their dresses : the attendant young curates wondering, and whispering, and murmuring still.

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### A WISH.

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As music breaking o'er the heart,  
Rich with its thoughts and sympathies,  
So may thy moments come and part,  
Leaving the memory of bliss.

And, as the west wind wandering  
Freshly thro' sunshine, flowers and balm ;  
So, mid the sweets in life that spring,  
Thy path be beautiful and calm.



THE LITTLE GLEANERS.





## THE LUMLEY ENTAIL.

### CHAPTER XII.

#### MOORFELL.

UNDER the frosty February sky, bare against the treeless background of dreary Northumbrian moorland, stood the buildings which marked the site of the Moorfell New Pit. Not a cheering place at any time; with its gaunt brick engine-house, its huge skeleton of timber above the mouth of the shaft, its low cabins, and black heaps of coal and stone. Not a cheerful place even when the cage was constantly bringing to the surface fresh loads of "black diamonds," when the lads were singing at the door of the engine-room, and when the bustle of the workmen gave something like life to the scene.

Poor Gerald when he first knew what a pit village in Northumberland really was; when he first saw the spot where he had undertaken to spend some of the best years of his life, learning the art of money-making, had been sorely disheartened.

To-day, however, there hangs round the dreary spot a special aspect of desolation. The engine is heard no more panting and groaning in its house; the rigging of the cage no longer glides smoothly up and down the shaft, but hangs in a tangled heap about the great timber scaffold which rises over the mouth of the pit. There are no songs from the lads; no shouts from the men. The lads and the men are no longer to be seen. Their places are supplied by women who, gathered round the black and yawning chasm, are rocking their bodies to and fro, in silent despair.

The Moorfell New Pit "fired" some three hours ago, when it was full of workpeople: and here are their wives and children waiting for their dead to be brought out. For that all are dead, amongst those who were in the pit when the accident occurred, seems to be pretty well understood now. During these three hours that have elapsed since that dull reverberation which shook the neighbouring village, announced the calamity that had befallen them, more than one exploring party has ventured down into the depths of the mine, only however to find the ways strewn with the bodies of the dead.

Gerald was not in the pit at the time the accident took place. His work, though it took him frequently into the mine, was more commonly performed in the colliery office in the little village close at hand ; and he had been labouring there when the gas in the pit exploded. But those who were fortunate enough to have been saved from the dreadful holocaust, amongst them being Redwood, the chief viewer, had no long interval allowed in which to congratulate themselves upon their escape. Their first business was instantly to descend into the pit, to see if any might still be in it—living.

So at this moment, when we find the women pressing round the open mouth of the pit, with white drawn faces and tearless eyes, and when we hear from the carpenter's shop the noise of many hammers nailing together the rude coffins required for the dead, another scene is being enacted a hundred fathoms beneath our feet. There in the thick darkness of the fatal mine, the exploring parties, to one of which Gerald is attached, are busied in restoring the ventilation of the pit, by erecting temporary doors and walls of bratticing in place of those destroyed by the explosion, and are searching for the dead.

Occasionally Redwood, or some other "viewer," who has volunteered his services, comes up to the surface—"to bank," as they call it in the dialect of the pit districts—perspiring and exhausted. It is only for a few minutes that he comes up, however, to ask for more bratticing, or to whisper instructions to the few workpeople still left about the colliery. It is a terrible accident which has taken place. The full complement of hands was engaged in the pit when the explosion occurred. Every home in yonder village has lost one at least of its bread-winners ; every woman pressing round the shaft mourns some one near and dear to her. Doctors, policemen, pitmen from the surrounding collieries—who have ceased work in their own pits the moment news of the calamity reached them—engineers from the neighbouring town, are all gathering quickly about the place, anxious to help ; and meanwhile the searching parties below are pursuing their perilous and painful task.

To Gerald this sudden episode, terrible as it is, comes almost with a sense of relief. He has been wearying of the monotonous studies and labours of the last five months, and though he has not relaxed in them, he has longed for some great event to change the even tenour of his life, and lend variety to his daily work. It has come now. There is all the fierce excitement of a battle-field in this labour in which he is now engaged ; and there is also the peril of a real battle. He is doing hero's work, though he hardly knows it, as he struggles through these long black

corridors, examining one prostrate body after another to see, if haply there may still be life in it ; and raising a loud "halloo" at the mouth of one working-place after another, to discover if, perchance, there may be any left there to respond to it.

His pulse was beating high with courage, despite the horrible sights which he had witnessed by the dim light of his lamp ; his face was flushed with excitement ; he felt that in this search for the living amongst the dead, carried on at imminent risk to himself, he was taking a real part in the great battle of man with nature. And his spirits rose as the work increased in difficulty.

Accompanied by two grimy and half-naked "hewers," who had descended the shaft with him almost immediately after the accident took place, he had wandered into one of the more distant parts of the mine. The ventilation here, though bad, was not so bad but that he and his companions could breathe ; and they were slowly picking their way onward through the passages, almost blocked by fallen roofs and sides, when Gerald became conscious of the fact that some one was following them, and calling to them to turn. It was Redwood's voice which they heard ; and Gerald therefore immediately obeyed.

"For God's sake, Gerald, go no further down there!" cried Redwood, when he had come up with the little party. "If you do you're certain to get into the after-damp. We must carry the air in with us, as we go along." And then the viewer explained how this was to be done.

He was as calm as Gerald was excited. There had vanished from his manner every trace of the gay levity which usually characterized it ; and his bearing was that of a general on the battle-field, rather than that of the pleasant genial companion whom Gerald had learned to love during these months of sojourn in Northumberland, as he had loved no man before except his own father.

The party, now numbering four in all, retraced their steps towards the main passage from which Gerald had turned into this portion of the mine ; and as they went, Redwood gave our hero instructions as to the next work he was to perform.

Suddenly they heard a loud noise before them. All paused, startled and alarmed.

"What was that?" asked Gerald, impulsively.

"It sounded like a big fall in the roof," replied Redwood ; "we shall soon see, however."

They pushed on as rapidly as they could, Redwood going first with his lamp, the others following in Indian file, all bending low,



and walking with a painful stoop, in order to avoid the irregularities of the low roof.

They had not gone far when Redwood paused, and said "Stop!" to the others. They halted too. What was it? It was so dark—dark with a blackness of which those who have never been a hundred fathoms underground can have no conception—that at first they could see nothing. Of one thing only were they conscious; and that was that the terrible heat which always fills these fiery mines was increasing, and that instead of the current of air which ought to have been passing through the gallery, the atmosphere seemed perfectly motionless. Redwood's eyes, peering forward into the gloom, however, were soon able to distinguish the cause of the phenomenon which had attracted his attention. Without raising his voice, or betraying the smallest agitation in his manner, he turned round to his companions, and said:

"We're trapped. The roof has fallen in upon us."

"Then may the Lord have mercy on us! For we're done men," ejaculated one of the pitmen named Gascoigne, who was known as a Methodist class-leader.

"Hold thy noise, Robert Gascoigne," said the other pitman, who was made of sterner stuff than his comrade: "Can't we get out by the 'back-way'?"

"The back-way must be full of stythe," said Redwood, "but it's our only chance. Let us try!"

Then all four turned and retraced their steps as rapidly as possible. Heavier and heavier grew the air the further they advanced. The perspiration poured from each of them in torrents; they breathed with difficulty; their lights burned dimly.

"Keep together, men!" said Redwood presently, "and hold up as long as you can. If one of us drops the others must carry him."

Gerald at this moment became conscious of strange sensations in his head, which suddenly seemed to have swelled to an enormous size, and to be made of cork. All manner of curious visions, too, presented themselves to his gaze. The white fungi with which the roof and the walls of the gallery were coated, assumed fantastic shapes, and the unwholesome growth seemed to be converted into all manner of noisome reptiles and unclean things, which, pendant from the roof, appeared to be waving him onward to destruction. He felt Redwood's hand upon his arm, however, and the touch gave him fresh strength and courage.

"Don't despair, Gerald!" said the viewer in his kindest tones, "but if anything happens to me, and you get safe to bank, give my love to my mother, and tell her——"

He said no more, but suddenly stumbled forward and would have fallen had not Gerald caught him in his arms.

Our hero uttered a cry of alarm. One of the men walked forward without taking any notice of it, intent only upon saving his own life. The other, Gascoigne, the methodist, sprang to Gerald's side, and partially relieved him of his burthen.

"What is it, Gascoigne? Are we in the after-damp?"

"Aye, aye, sir! we're in the stythe sure enough, and only God knows whether we'll ever get out of it. There ought to be air in the 'return,' and that's our only chance. We must take Mr. Redwood with us, or we must die with him."

"I shall never leave him, Gascoigne, but if I give way too, you must leave us. You can't take either of us by yourself, and you must save your own life."

What did Gascoigne say in response to this? He had no heroics to utter such as those which would have brought down the gallery, if spouted upon the stage of the Adelphi. He was a common, unlettered man, with no pretensions to anything in the shape of heroism, but like thousands more of these Northumbrian pitmen, he had an utter disregard for danger in the hour of peril, and was ready cheerfully to lay down his own life, if need be, to save the life of another. Like many of his comrades, too, he had that strong faith in the future, and in a future life, where were to be supplied ample compensations for all the sorrows of this world, which has been the motive-power, so to speak, of many of the simplest and noblest souls earth has ever known.

Gerald and Gascoigne moved but slowly now, dragging between them the senseless form of Redwood, whose physical powers, exhausted by the tremendous exertions he had been making, had given way sooner than theirs had done. They were within an ace of death. A few minutes more of that fatal atmosphere, and all three would be stretched senseless on the flooring of the gallery, never to wake in this world. All their hopes depended upon their finding fresh air in the gallery to which they were now hastening, and of that the chances were but small, depending entirely upon whether or not the oak doors by which the ventilation of the pit was regulated had in this part of the mine withstood the force of the explosion.

Presently Gascoigne, in a rough but not unmelodious voice, began to sing a hymn, the refrain of which ran somewhat as follows:—

"For now we stand on Jordan's strand;  
Our friends are passing over;  
And just before, the golden shore,  
We almost may discover."

Gerald, all of whose energies were taxed by his effort to move

forward with the helpless form of Redwood, entreated the other not to waste his strength in singing; but now Gascoigne made the long roof of the gallery ring with the sad, wailing tune of the hymn, and Gerald perceived that he was literally intoxicated by the poisoned atmosphere they were inhaling. Happily, although his mind was affected, there was as yet no failure of his physical powers. If these had gone, certain death would have been the lot of all of them. Still singing at the top of his voice, except when he broke off in the middle of a verse to utter a wild prayer, not for deliverance from danger, but for forgiveness for his sins, Gascoigne pursued his way.

Gerald, who knew nothing of this part of the pit, trembled with apprehension, lest his companion in his delirium should pass the road into "the return." He was, moreover, rapidly becoming exhausted. The symptoms in his head were increasing in severity. He felt that a few steps more were all that he could accomplish, and he gave up hope.

But at that moment of extremest peril the danger suddenly passed away. Gascoigne, still singing and praying, led him up a short and narrow gallery cut out of solid rock. At the further end of this gallery was an oaken door, still standing. The hewer flung the door open, and Gerald wearily dragged Redwood into the passage beyond, then sank fainting on the ground.

A cool current of air was passing along this gallery; the ventilation, therefore, was still perfect in this part of the mine. Gascoigne's senses returned soon after they had reached this haven. He looked round him like a man awaking from a dream, then said—

"We were nearly at home, just now, friend, but God has willed that we should be spared a little longer. Let us pray."

Gerald was too weak to imitate Gascoigne so far as to kneel down. But he closed his weary eyes, and the two prayed beside Redwood's prostrate and insensible form. Then Gascoigne bade Gerald stay where he was, whilst he sought for help, and leaving him with the viewer he went forward, presently returning with a searching party who bore both of them away to the shaft.

This was the only adventure of a personal kind which befell Gerald on this eventful day. How near he was to death whilst he and Gascoigne were dragging Redwood through the passages filled with choke-damp, he did not himself know until the evening of that day, when the dead body of the man who had left them when Redwood fell, was found a few yards beyond the passage by which they had escaped into "the return." He had missed the opening, and penetrating still further into the region of deadly gas, had soon succumbed to it.



Our hero speedily regained his strength when he returned "to bank," and before the day was over he was again in the pit, aiding Redwood, whose recovery had been even more speedy than his own; but neither of them encountered any more perils such as that which I have described.

Towards midnight, however, when he chanced to have come up to the surface with a message from the viewer, the colliery doctor, who was waiting there in case his services should chance to be required, saw that Gerald was almost fainting from fatigue.

"I'll tell you what it is, young man," said the doctor, a rough but kindly disciple of *Æsculapius*, known to everybody connected with coal-mining for miles around, "if you don't go straight home and go to bed, you'll be fit for very little to-morrow. Let me feel your pulse. Ah! I thought so. This won't do; you must get away at once."

"I can't go yet, doctor; you know they are just going to bring up the bodies, and they want all the help they can get."

"Don't be foolish, sir," was the reply. "There are no lives to be saved now, and remember that you very nearly lost your own this morning. Your place is not here, but in bed."

"Then I can only say that I shan't go without an order from Mr. Redwood."

"Here's Mr. Redwood to give you the order," said the doctor, turning to where Redwood, who had just come up from the pit, was standing.

The result was that Gerald, much against his will, found himself very speedily in bed. He would not have yielded so soon, but for certain strange and unpleasant sensations of which he had been conscious for some hours, and which were increasing in intensity at the time when the doctor spoke to him.

Not until his aching head was on his pillow, and he was just falling into an uneasy slumber, did he remember the fact of which a few hours ago he had thought so much—the fact that this was Laura's wedding-day. A sharp stinging pain shot through the poor lad's whole frame when his recollection of the fact was suddenly revived; but the next moment, there came thoughts of the horrors of the day, of the gloom and the anguish which had settled upon a hundred homes within a stone's throw of the spot where he then was, of the wives who had been widowed, the children who had been orphaned, the parents who had been bereft, during the hours of this same day. He felt almost ashamed of himself for feeling his own grief, in comparison with theirs. But more than this, his feeling for Laura suddenly changed from one of love into one of pity, almost of contempt.

"She knows nothing of sorrow or trouble," he mur-

mured to himself. "Poor girl; she has that knowledge yet to acquire."

His thoughts wandered back over the course of his own sad life for the past eight months, and perhaps for the first time he realized all the blessed influences which sorrow brings in its train. He could hardly believe that less than a year ago he was the proud, passionate, heedless boy, who had justly incurred the dislike of most of those who knew him. Recognizing the change which had been wrought in him since that time, he recognized the blessedness of those sore troubles by means of which that change had been accomplished. And so he fell into an uneasy, feverish sleep.

### CHAPTER XIII.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

I HAVE dwelt upon this episode in Gerald's stay at Moorfell, not only because it was the first incident of a note-worthy character which marked his life there, but because it was destined to exercise a remarkable influence upon his future. His early days at the pit-village had been common-place and prosaic in the extreme. He had lived in humble lodgings, in the house of the village schoolmaster, and had devoted himself sedulously to his profession. Except an occasional visit to Redwood's bachelor home at Newcastle, he had allowed himself no change. All his energies were devoted to his work, and short as was the time he had spent in study when the accident took place, he had already made marked progress and shown himself capable of great things in the future.

But now his studies were destined to a serious interruption. His physical powers, exhausted by the months of anxiety and of labour through which he had passed, were unequal to the strain put upon them during that terrible adventure of his in the pit. The morning after the accident he was delirious; fever had seized him, and for many days his life was in danger. His lot during this illness would have been a forlorn one had it not been for the tenderness with which he was nursed by two persons. One of these was Redwood, who knowing that he owed his life to Gerald, tended him with all the care of a brother. The other was the niece of the village schoolmaster, in whose house he lodged. Gerald had seen little of this girl before the accident. Indeed, except when he chanced to meet her in the little garden in front of the house, he had never spoken to her. Nearly thirty years of age, Mary Henderson did not look more than twenty. She was

not beautiful ; but upon her quiet face there rested such an air of peace, that the lines which ought to have been there were all smoothed away, and she looked fully ten years younger than she was. The expression of happy, passionless repose which always shone on her countenance was due—to what ? To the fact that she was a confirmed invalid, a deformed cripple, for whom life meant only two things—endurance and self-sacrifice.

Oh ! you who are blessed with health and strength ; you upon whom nature has showered her choicest blessings, do you never ask yourselves how it is that those to whom she has given least, should so often take her gifts with a thankfulness which you have never felt for all the splendid favours she has conferred on you ? How constantly do we see those whose lot appears to us to be pitiable in the extreme, living their lives in peace and cheerfulness and serenity ? Weak women who day by day suffer bodily torments from which strong men would shrink with horror ; and who bear the pain and anguish with happy smiles, and uncomplaining patience ; men, who possessing all the qualities of mind which fit them to rule their fellows, or to take an active part in the battle of life, are from the first moment of the struggle invalided, shut out of the great arena ; and who yet can take up their heavy cross and carry it without a murmur. How little do those whose lot is happier, and who are not doomed to be mere spectators of life's great battle, think of all that has to be suffered by these stricken ones ? And yet how many a blessed lesson might be learned from their quiet lives of patient endurance.

When Gerald awoke to full consciousness after the fever had left him, it was upon the face of Mary Henderson that his eyes first rested. His mind, during the fierce attacks of delirium, seemed to have become a white tablet. Much that had been inscribed upon that tablet before, in letters that were seemingly indelible, was now clean gone for ever. Some of his past passions and desires were still left however, and time will show what these were.

His eye wandering vacantly round the half-darkened room, with its unpretending furniture, rested at last upon Mary's face. He did not know where he was ; for the moment he remembered nothing of the accident—an event which was now three weeks old—and he did not recognize Mary. But his eye found in the quiet face, something which it was pleasant to rest upon. She was sitting reading from a well-worn book laid upon the little table before her. A childish curiosity filled the mind of Gerald with respect to this same book. He thought nothing of the place where he was, or of the woman who was before him ; but he wanted to know what the book was which she was reading. He tried to



frame questions in his mind, to put to her about it. But he found it difficult to do so; and at last he gave up the effort, and lay looking at her, simply wondering in his mind what the volume was, and still resolving to ask her when his powers of speech returned.

Everything was very, very quiet. In a dim confused sort of way he felt that it must be Sunday. A frosty March sun shone upon the darkened window; a kettle was hissing on the hob; but no sound from the outer world entered the room. He was satisfied that it must be Sunday. And then his mind went back to the book.

Presently the reader looked up, and turned towards him. She saw that he was awake, and instantly arose and moved slowly and painfully towards the bed. At the same moment, Gerald's powers of speech seemed to return.

"What book are you reading?" he asked.

The girl smiled, and said in a low soft voice,

"I am reading 'Thomas à Kempis.'"

At the moment, Gerald could not recall any associations connected with the name of the book; so he only smiled in return, a wan, feeble smile, that brought tears of pity into the other's eyes.

"Am I—very—ill?" he asked, presently.

"You have been very ill; but you are getting better now. The doctor says you will soon be all right again."

Gerald looked the thanks which he was too weak to speak, in return for this information. The girl raised her finger, as an injunction against more talking, then gave him something cool and pleasant to drink, and smoothed his pillow. As she was about to return to her seat, he spoke again.

"Will you kiss me, please?" he said.

Mary coloured painfully, and hesitated; but she could not withstand the earnest pleading in the boy's eyes. Gravely she stooped down, and touched his forehead with her lips. Then the invalid fell into a peaceful slumber, as though he were a child whose mother had just kissed him.

Several hours later, he awoke again. Mary was sitting in precisely the same position as when he awoke before. It seemed to him that he had but closed his eyes and opened them again. There was something so soothing, so restful about her face, that it did him good to look at her. He had never seen a face like it before, he thought. It was a face which seemed to shed peace around it, like a halo. As he lay here now, his mind and memory slowly began to regain their powers, and he recollected that he was in the house of the Moorfell schoolmaster, and that the girl before

him was the schoolmaster's niece. Still all recollection of the accident was blotted from his mind.

Faintly there came borne in upon the March breeze, the sound of distant church bells. Then he knew that he had been right in his fancy when he was awake before, and that it was really Sunday. He spoke ; and instantly Mary came to the side of his bed. He smiled again, and there was a grave responsive smile upon her face.

"Will you read to me?" he said.

"Should you not try to rest just now? You are still very weak you know. I shall be glad to read to you at some other time."

"No, I have rested long enough. I want you to read to me now, please!"

There was still a childlike wistfulness in his pleading which Mary could not resist.

"It shall be as you like," she said, soothingly. "Would you like me to read a chapter from the Bible to you?"

"No ; no :—" said Gerald, hurriedly ; upon which Mary looked somewhat pained. He was too weak to notice the effect of his words upon her ; but he added, "Read to me, please, from that book," and his eye wandered towards the table where "Thomas à Kempis" lay.

I have spoken of Mary's low sweet voice : truly an "excellent thing" in a woman, and at no time more excellent than when it is employed in reading to a sick man. She began to read at the page which was open in the little well-worn volume : and these were the words which she read :—

"Son, be not dismayed ; neither let the tribulations which befall thee, quite cast thee down ; but let my promise strengthen thee, and comfort thee in all events. I am sufficient to reward thee beyond all measure. Thou shalt not labour here long, nor shalt thou be always oppressed with sorrows. Wait a little while, and thou shalt see a speedy end of all thy evils. The hour will come when labour and trouble shall be no more. All is little and short which passeth away with time. Peace shall come in one day, which is known to the Lord : and it shall not be a changing of day into night, such as is at present ; but everlasting light, infinite brightness, steadfast peace, and secure rest. Thou shalt not then say, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? Nor shalt thou cry out, Wo is me for that my sojourning is prolonged. For death shall be no more, but never-failing health ; no anxiety, but blessed delight, and a society sweet and lovely. Oh, if thou hadst seen the everlasting crowns of the saints in heaven, and in how great glory they now triumph, who appeared contemptible

heretofore to this world, and in a manner even unworthy of life, doubtless thou wouldst immediately cast thyself down to the very earth, and wouldst rather seek to be under the feet of all, than to have command over so much as one. Neither wouldst thou covet the pleasant days of this life, but wouldst rather be glad to suffer tribulation for God's sake, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst men.'"

Mary ceased reading, but Gerald, whose mind had caught rather the general tenor of the words she had uttered than the words themselves, could see that upon the girl's face there was a soft light which for the moment made it really beautiful.

"What 'Thomas à Kempis' again, always 'Thomas à Kempis'!" cried a genial voice from the open doorway, and at the first sound Mary closed the book, blushing.

It was Dr. Adamson, the colliery surgeon, who spoke, and who now came into the room, big and burly, but with a kindly smile spreading over his broad shrewd face. "My little woman, you'll muddle your head with that old saint of yours. Don't you know that he was too good for this earth—like some other people I know?" And the doctor's eye rested a moment tenderly upon Mary's peaceful face. "And what about our patient to-day? Oh, awake and able to smile at his old doctor. This is good news."

Then the surgeon put various questions to the invalid; felt his pulse; looked at his tongue; went through the whole of the prescribed formulæ in fact. Then he said gravely:

"I know what we are now. We're weak and shaky, and beginning to feel dreadfully hungry. Yes: I know we are. Well, well, chicken broth to begin with, something stronger afterwards. And mind you, Mary, none of your 'Thomas à Kempis' notions, do you hear that?"

"But what do you call Thomas à Kempis notions, doctor?" said Mary.

"I mean all notions about self-denial. Self-denial won't do here; this young gentleman must be petted and pampered, and made a great deal of for the next month. If you are going to starve him, and make a saint of him, he'll become an angel before he's ready for the change."

"You know me better than to suppose that I would starve Mr. Lumley, doctor," said Mary, still with her peaceful smile.

"Yes, yes, little woman; I know you better than to think you would starve him. But you mustn't starve yourself either: or work too hard. Come, your favourite saint lived to be ninety-two, and that's what I intend you to do. The fact is, I can't do without you before then."



"Ninety-two!" said Mary, and the smile died away from her face. "Yes: ninety-two. That was his age when he died. Ninety-two years of martyrdom, and already four hundred years of glory. Yes, doctor, I'll live to be ninety-two if God is willing."

"Thank you for the promise," said the doctor, on whose healthy animalism Mary's morbid spirituality—for so he accounted it—made no sort of impression. "And now about Mr. Lumley?"

The days went on pleasantly enough for the convalescent. At times, of course, he suffered much from pain and weakness, but he continued to improve steadily. Nothing could have been more tender or devoted than the attention bestowed upon him by Mary. She nursed him as carefully and lovingly as sister or mother could have done. Many a pleasant quiet chat did they have together, during those long days when she sat working beside him. Weak as she was, she would read to him for hours at a stretch. The books she read from were generally chosen by Gerald himself; but at odd times she was allowed to read from her own slender stock of volumes, and when she did so she opened up a new field of thought for Gerald's cultivation.

Like many other young men in the station of life to which of right he belonged, our hero knew comparatively little of that literature of the inner life to which such books as the "Imitation of Christ" and "In Memoriam" belong. All his reading, where it had diverged from the ordinary studies of a schoolboy on the one hand, and from mere novel-reading on the other, had been intensely practical. Gerald had always had a liking for mechanics, and long before he had ever dreamt of having to earn his living as a mining engineer, he had studied books which in his present profession were invaluable to him. But that mystical spiritual literature, the study of which is to many so fascinating, had hitherto been a sealed book to him. It was Mary Henderson who opened up to him that wonderful inner life, of the very existence of which the sermons to which he had listened—or not listened—as a matter of duty, once a week, had left him in ignorance.

Many times he wondered how she, a girl belonging apparently to a class raised little above that of the peasantry, should have acquired so wide a knowledge of this field of literature, and should show so many proofs of a culture and refinement far beyond her station in life. He forgot the chastening and refining influence which such an affliction as that under which Mary laboured, often has upon characters like hers. Her lessons, like his own, had all been learned in the bitter school of suffering.

Bit by bit he told this girl,—with whom, before his illness, he

never exchanged a dozen sentences—all his history ; and not only the mere story of his father's death and his own troubles which has been sketched in these pages, but the history of his mental struggles, of his love for Laura, of his hatred of his cousin. Like many another wounded man, he found in a woman's tender sympathy, a solace which was to be had nowhere else.

With wonderful skill and tenderness Mary, from the depth of her own experience, laid balm upon his wounds, and sowed in his mind the seeds of healthier and kindlier feelings than had ever taken root there before.

They became like brother and sister. The month of convalescence during which she waited upon him, proved to Gerald the most blessed period of his life. He came out of his sick chamber chastened and humbled: "a new creature." He came out with new feelings, new hopes, new desires. His fierce love for Laura had blazed out, and its ashes were cold. His still fiercer hatred for his cousin—ah ! *that* passion still lingered deep down in his heart of hearts, although he fought against it, and prayed against it with all his strength. It still lingered, despite Mary's gentle cautions and his own better desires ; but it was no longer the ruling passion of his life. It was there, ready to blaze up again, when the breeze fanned the ashes : but it was no longer the all-consuming fire, to which everything was sacrificed. It was to a life of duty and self-sacrifice that he thought himself called now. For him nothing on earth, however beautiful it might be, was henceforth to charm or attract ! Earthly love was never more to chain his affections to an earthly creature. No longer were his own pleasures and desires to be the objects by which his life was guided. He had seen better things than those of this world in that sick chamber. Thomas à Kempis had fascinated him, as during these four centuries, he has fascinated thousands of the noblest souls earth has ever known ; and self-sacrifice and self-abnegation were henceforward to be the ruling powers of his life.

This was what Gerald thought when, weak and worn, he first crossed the threshold of the house, after his long illness, to take advantage of the pale spring sunshine. Like many another man who has learnt that all earthly things are vanity, and that lasting joy is nowhere in this world, he had resolved to trample his own desires and pleasures under foot, and to live for a higher life hereafter ; but like too many of those who have formed the same resolve, he imagined that the goal was reached, when he had but set his face upon the road thitherwards.

"What have you been doing with your patient, Mary?" said Dr. Adamson, one day, after he had been talking to Gerald, who

was sitting in the schoolmaster's little garden. "The boy's spirit is all taken out of him."

"Yes," said Mary, who, worn out by her attendance upon our hero, was herself now needing the doctor's care. "Yes, his spirit is gone, thank God. But he's got a better spirit in its place."

"My dear creature," remonstrated the other, who had an intense admiration for Mary's patience and unselfishness; but no great sympathy with her peculiar views. "You'll ruin the lad if you don't take care. He's losing his interest in life, and we'll see him turn moping methodist next."

"He has learned to interest himself in the better life, doctor," said Mary, with her grave smile, "and you know that that is of far more importance than this life."

"Mary, I've often told that you would make an excellent saint; but we're not all women, remember. A man must have a man's food, and if he does not get it, he is very apt to sink and fail. Lumley is too young to lose his interest in this life in looking beyond it, and trying to imagine that he sees what is there."

"Doctor, Mr. Lumley has learnt in the suffering he has gone through during the last twelve months, that real happiness is only to be found in self-sacrifice. I know that men don't often learn that lesson when they are as young as he is; but the sooner they learn it, the better it must be for them."

"Well, little woman, I give up the argument," said the doctor, with a jovial laugh. "I always get the worse of it when I talk with you. Your notions are much too ethereal to be grasped by my materialistic mind. But as I'm Lumley's medical attendant, I give you fair warning that he shan't fall into any morbid fancies if I can help it."

"Oh, Dr. Adamson, you won't try to destroy the good work that has been done in his mind during the last few weeks," cried the fair enthusiast, with an eagerness which was indicated by the sudden flush upon her pale face.

"Now don't excite yourself, my dear;" said the doctor, soothingly. "If Lumley only learns to be half as good as you, he'll be a better fellow than nine-tenths of the men around him. But I can't have the physic you are giving him for his mind, interfering with the action of the physic I'm giving him for his body."

It was quite true that Gerald, still weak with the effects of illness, was falling into somewhat morbid views of life. From his sick-bed the present world with its petty strifes and jealousies, its cares and its joys, had seemed so small, so very small a matter, in comparison with that dim unknown Hereafter, upon which now, for the first time, he began to fix his thoughts; that nothing



seemed easier to him than to turn from it in disgust ; to cease to live for it, or to take any interest in its affairs, and only to look forward to that narrow portal through which he was surely destined to pass ; and beyond which lay something, the full glory and significance of which he could not yet grasp, but which he felt must be glorious and important, infinitely beyond any life which could be led on this earth.

It was Redwood who first tried to bring him back to his old ways of life, after his illness. This is not the place in which to enter into those wonderfully vague theological disputations in which young men are in the habit of indulging themselves at certain periods of their lives ; or else I might report many of the long arguments in which the pleasant and strictly honourable, but withal cynical, man of the world engaged with his young pupil. If Redwood had been less generous and loyal, he might have been inclined to quarrel with Gerald, now that he no longer found in him a companion so thoroughly congenial as he had been during the first months of our hero's stay at Moorfell. As it was, however, the "viewer" did not allow his interest in the lad to be lessened in the slightest degree. "He will be all right again when he has got over this confounded attack," he said to himself, as he meditated upon the subject over his cigar one evening.

And Mary, on her side, spent hours in earnest prayer that the new light which had shone into the lad's heart might never even be dimmed, but that it might burn on, shining more and more until the perfect day.

Gerald was recovering his old strength rapidly, and was once more busy at his work, which he had resumed as a duty rather than a pleasure, when an unexpected incident occurred to break the monotony of his life at Moorfell. This was nothing less than a visit which he received from his father's quondam agent, Peter Dawson.

Peter had heard, he said, of Gerald's illness, and had wished to come to see him earlier, but had been delayed by an attack of "the rheumatiz."

The old man was getting very grey and worn in appearance now, and his lean face, upon which the lines seemed every year to be more and more deeply marked, now presented by no means a prepossessing appearance. Nothing could exceed the affectionate deference which he showed towards Gerald. The agent had always liked the boy. He had known from the day of his birth that he was illegitimate, but he had been unable to shake off that deference which his instincts taught him to show towards one who was generally believed to be Sir George Lumley's heir ; and he

had moreover been one of the few men who in Gerald's brighter days had always found him courteous and pleasant.

So now, upon this his first meeting with him from the time of his father's death, Peter fairly wept over his changed prospects.

Gerald was moved at this manifestation of feeling on the old man's part, but he soon showed that he had no sympathy with its cause.

"Don't be sorry for me, Dawson. Indeed there's no need. I am better as I am ; much better than I should have been if I had inherited my father's estates ;" and then he added some words which caused the agent to open his eyes in amazement.

"But, Mr. Gerald, sir," said he, "do you mean to say you are content that your cousin should step into your shoes and deprive you of what ought to have been yours by right ?"

"It was all for the best, Dawson. I only hope the possession of the estates may not do my cousin any harm." As Gerald uttered these words his face assumed a hard, set expression. Even Dawson could see that however changed he might be otherwise, he had not yet finally conquered his feeling of resentment against his cousin.

"Now see here, sir," he said, in tones which were intended to be insinuating, "the captain didn't deal fairly by you, nor by me neither for the matter of that. He's a bad lot is the captain, sir, and though he's been very pleasant since he got married, particularly pleasant with me, I may say ; I've no fancy for him. Now, sir, wouldn't you like to be revenged upon him ? just tell me that."

"No, Dawson. God forbid that I should be avenged upon him. He is in God's hands. I intended once to take him into mine, and to deal with him as I thought fit, but I hope that thought will never come back to me again. It shan't if I can help it."

"Aye ; but, sir, justice is justice. Now justice wasn't done when you was turned out as you was, without a penny. Sir George never intended that. He meant you to be as rich as the captain any day, and he improved the estates for the captain at the same time that he made money for you."

It was true, quite true. Gerald knew it ; and as he listened to what Dawson said, the temptation stirred within him in strength. Still he resisted however.

"Pray don't talk about these things, Dawson. They only trouble me needlessly. Sir Arthur Lumley is in better hands than mine, and he will be dealt with justly in the end. Tell me about yourself. Have you come down here on purpose to see me ?"

"Well, not exactly, sir," said Peter, hesitating. "The fact is my own people come from about this neighbourhood, and I thought I'd just like to have a peep at them again before I die."

"I should have thought that you would have settled amongst your own friends now that you have nothing to do with the estate."

"No, sir; no. My work at Lumley isn't done yet." He laid one of his lean, gnarled fingers on Gerald's hand, and stooping forward said, "Mark my words, sir, you'll see something there that will astonish you before long."

"What on earth do you mean, Dawson?" cried Gerald with something of his old impetuosity of manner.

"You'll see, sir! you'll see, sir!" And then Peter laughed in the uncomfortable fashion common to him, displaying two huge ridges of yellow tusks. "Yes, Mr. Gerald, you'll see, for I'll let you know when the play's going to begin."

This, in the opinion of Mr. Peter Dawson, was a brilliant joke. He laughed at it at intervals during the whole of the remaining time he spent with Gerald.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### NELLIE.

"My dear," said Dr. Adamson one evening to his wife, as, slippers on feet, and *Newcastle Journal* in hand, he was resting himself according to his wont after the labours of the day; "my dear, I want you to take in a visitor for a week or two."

Mrs. Adamson, who was nearly as rotund, and had almost as good-humoured a face as that possessed by her worthy spouse, dropped her knitting on her lap, and looked up over her spectacles in astonishment.

"Why, John, what can you be thinking about by asking visitors at this time of the year, with the summer cleaning still to be got through, and with Nellie coming home next week?"

"Oh, it's nobody you need make any fuss about," said her husband, secretly happy in the thought that his hospitality might possibly lead to the postponement of the "cleaning" for a time. "It's that poor young Lumley at Moorfell. I want to have him here for a week or two."

"Isn't he getting better as fast as he should do?" inquired Mrs. Adamson.

"Oh, he's mending fast. It would be a shame if he didn't with all the nursing he's had at Henderson's; but the fact is I want to get him away from Mary Henderson's reach for a little while."



"John, how ridiculous you are!" said Mrs. Adamson, with the angry warmth of one who had just heard an unworthy insinuation uttered against a favourite. "There's not a girl in the world who would be less likely to forget herself than poor Mary. I wish you wouldn't be so absurd."

"My dear Betsy," responded the husband meekly, "nobody thinks as highly of Mary as I do. Barring yourself and our Nellie, there's not a woman I ever met whom I like as well as I like her. But the fact is she's too good for this world, and she's trying to make this young Lumley too good for it also. What I want to do is to bring him here for a while, and see if I can't get some of Mary's notions out of his head. She's stuffed him with them whilst she's had him in her power during his illness."

"I'll tell you what it is, John," said Mrs. Adamson, whose great and indeed only cause of complaint against her husband was the fact that he declined to attend church more than once on Sunday, and was in the habit of laughing at a very evangelical curate who was Mrs. Adamson's latest ecclesiastical pet. "It would do you a great deal of good if Mary could get some of her notions into *your* head. I wish she would try. I've given it up as hopeless long ago."

"Mary has put many a good notion into my head, my dear, and you've put many another," responded the worthy doctor with a laugh; "so don't despair of me. But about this young Lumley. He's quite alone in the world. Redwood told me that himself; and apart from any question of Mary and her motives, a little change would do him a world of good. So do you think you can do with him next week?"

"But Nellie's coming home then, John."

"So much the better," said the doctor stoutly. "In his present frame of mind Lumley isn't likely to fall in love with her; and she'll do him more good than all the rubbish in my surgery."

"Well, well, John, you always have an answer for me," replied the lady, heaving one of those gentle sighs by means of which even the happiest of British matrons will at times indicate that the lot of a married woman, however smooth it may be, may still at times be made uneasy by a crumpled rose leaf. "I suppose I must let him have the front spare bed-room." And thereupon Mrs. Adamson fell into a reverie concerning sundry matters of domestic life.

When Gerald received a warm invitation from the doctor to spend a fortnight at his house, which, though it was pleasantly situate away from the immediate neighbourhood of the coal-pits, was still within easy reach of Moorfell, he was at first inclined not to accept it. He was going to live a life of hard self-sacrifice;

that was his fixed intention ; and he felt that he could not begin to deny himself too soon. To be tempted to such social pleasures as he knew would await him at the doctor's house would be thought to be a weakness on the part of one who had taken Thomas a Kempis for the guide and director of his daily life. But when the doctor, whose kindness to him in his illness he was forced to acknowledge, pressed him to come as a personal favour, he was forced to yield, and he agreed to go.

He felt rather afraid to tell Mary that he had accepted the invitation ; but she received the news with one of her sweet grave smiles.

"It will do you good, Mr. Lumley," she said, "to get a change. There isn't a kinder woman in the world than Mrs. Adamson ; and hardly a kinder man than her husband. I hope you will enjoy your visit."

"I know how kind the doctor is. It seems to me that everybody is kind to me ; although a few months ago, I thought that everybody was cruel and hard towards me, and that I was alone in the world. I don't doubt the kindness of the doctor and his wife ; but I hardly feel that it is right for me to go there and enjoy myself. I ought rather, I think, to be beginning to work for others."

The halo seemed to form round Mary's still sweet face, as she heard these words.

"Oh, Mr. Lumley, thank God that you have this desire to work for others rather than for yourself. He has given it to you. I don't fear that you will do work, and good work for those whom He has committed to our charge ; but just now your strength has not quite come back, and this long illness makes you need a change greatly. You will feel all the readier for the life you are laying out for yourself, after you have had this rest."

"I hope so," said Gerald, doubtfully ; "but I fear nothing so much as my own strength and constancy."

"Nay, do not begin to doubt your constancy. Do you not know what Thomas à Kempis says about the man who, doubting himself, was constantly saying, 'If I did but know that, I should still persevere ;' and presently he heard within himself an answer from God : 'And if thou didst know this what wouldst thou do ? Do now what thou wouldst then do, and thou shalt be very secure.' You must act always for the present, and leave the future to itself."

Gerald went to the doctor's house, therefore, despite his misgivings. Once before he had been there dining with Adamson, and on that occasion he had experienced the kindness of the worthy surgeon's wife. Then, however, he had been bent upon

living for himself only ; now he was determined to trample self underfoot, and was full of anxious doubts and fears as to whether he was really doing right in allowing himself this recreation.

It was a beautiful spring morning, and when he had once fairly escaped from the precincts of Moorfell, and the Moorfell pit ; had passed the grey stone church with the little grave-yard, where lay the two hundred victims of the late accident, and had reached the fresh open country, his spirits began to revive. For nearly a year he had been passing through deep waters ; and during all that time no outward scenes could have soothed or cheered his spirit ; but now when he seemed to have found that in which true peace consists, his mind was open to the soothing influences of nature ; and as he walked briskly along the picturesque old road which led to his destination, he became sensible of a lightness of heart such as he had not known since he was a boy. He forgot his anxious doubts respecting himself, just as he forgot his great change of fortune, his love for Laura, his grievance against his cousin ; and almost unconsciously he found himself whistling cheerily, as he had been wont to do years ago in the grand woods at Lumley.

The doctor's house stood in the midst of a garden, shaded by a few of the stunted trees which are all that the sea-board of Northumberland can boast of. Gerald threw open the noisy wooden gate, and leaving it to close with a loud crash, he strode forward towards the house, still whistling. As he passed a group of shrubs, which shielded the lawn from the road, he suddenly paused and ceased to whistle, for an unexpected sight presented itself to him. It was a girl little more than a child apparently, who was running across the lawn chased by the smallest and most vicious of toy-terriers. Gerald, even in that first moment, thought he had never seen any living creature so beautiful as this girl, who laughing a merry musical laugh, the echo of which once heard could never be forgotten, and tossing a wealth of golden ringlets in the air as she fled from the dog, seemed to him more like a vision from a brighter world than any creature of earth. She was very plainly dressed, but the soft folds of her gown fell round her in graceful lines ; and, though there was nothing but a " bit of blue riband " tied in her hair, and a few violets fixed in her dress, Gerald thought he had never seen any one whose attire was more faultlessly perfect than hers.

When she saw him she stopped suddenly, and crying with her musical voice, " Down, Vic, down," came forward to where our hero was standing. Even at that moment, Gerald could not help asking himself wherein it was that her beauty lay. Her features were by no means classically regular ; if you had examined her



face in detail, you would probably have said that her eyes, "deeply, darkly, beautifully blue," were the only good points about it. But then nobody thought of examining Nellie Adamson's face in a coldly critical mood. Nobody who looked at that face had eyes for anything but the sunny smile which was constantly flitting across it, and the wonderfully bright and tender expression which it always wore.

"A mere child," said Gerald to himself, as he lifted his hat, "and the most charming child I ever saw."

Without a touch either of awkwardness or ill-breeding, the girl held out her hand to Gerald when she reached him, and said:

"Aunt has been expecting you all the morning, Mr. Lumley; uncle is out on his visits."

Gerald looked somewhat stupidly at the girl. Her manner when she spoke to him, though it had a freedom from any approach to conventional stiffness which in itself was charming, was by no means the manner of "a mere child."

Nevertheless, like other young men, having taken an idea into his head, our hero here stuck to it.

"I suppose," he said, "I have the honour of speaking to Miss Adamson?"

"Yes: don't you know me?" was the quick reply, with an arch look and smile. "I thought everybody knew everybody else here. I've known you ever since you came from London."

"Indeed; I've heard of you, Miss Adamson, but I never had the pleasure of seeing you."

"I've been away for three months. That is how it is, I suppose. I hope you are better, Mr. Lumley. I was so sorry to hear how ill you had been."

Gerald, accustomed during his early days to the somewhat frigid bearing of the young ladies of society, was as much amused as flattered by the innocent manner in which this "little girl" talked to him, as freely as though they had been friends for years.

At that moment I am afraid he forgot "Thomas à Kempis;" forgot, too, Mary's pale, sweet face, and would have plunged into a flirtation with his new acquaintance if he had been permitted to do so. But there was something about Nellie which forbade any attempt of the kind. It was evident that in all that she was saying to him, in the freedom with which she smiled and talked, and tossed the "little head, sunning over with curls," in the way in which she rebuked Vic for snarling at Gerald, she was acting naturally; and with no more thought of flirting than if the gentleman before her had been the Bishop of Durham himself.

"Aunt will be very glad to see you; won't you come in?" she said, and she led the way into the house, Gerald following her, with a dim sense of the fact that he was very glad that he had not refused the doctor's invitation.

Nellie's history was a simple one; so very simple, that half-a-dozen lines will tell all about it. She was the orphan daughter of the doctor's only brother, and had been "adopted" by her uncle some years before. His house was now her home, and Nellie, at seventeen, was as much the pet of the childless doctor and his wife, as at seven she had been the pet of her own father and mother. How sweet and pure and guileless she was, how full of the truest and tenderest womanliness of character, how simple and modest, and yet how full of mirth and sunshine, I despair of being able to convey to my readers. Yet this I may say, and it will perhaps convey more than any words of mine, Nellie was one of those happy girls who are liked by all women as much as by all men. Unhappily one does not often meet a girl, young and charming, of whom her friends of her own sex have nothing but good to report. Occasionally such a phenomenon does occur, however: and it occurred in the case of Nellie. The ladies of that district round Moorfell, young and old, grew even more enthusiastic about Nellie, and her sweet winning ways, than the gentlemen. The latter, indeed, were like Gerald, rather too much inclined to think of her as a mere child, and consequently to under-rate the true womanly heart which beat within her bosom. Nellie herself never aspired to be thought a woman. She was far happier playing with Vic, or with some wee toddling baby from a neighbour's house, than sitting amongst the society of Moorfell. A merry game, in which there was plenty of noise and laughter and excitement, was what she loved better than any conventional amusement; and occasionally prudes would try to shake their heads when they saw her playing wildly in the garden, as though she were still innocent of her "teens;" but not even the sourest of prudes could utter a spiteful word of one whose heart was as pure as it was loving, and who never hesitated to sacrifice her own pleasures for the sake of others.

Oh! darling Nellie, if I could sketch you here, as you really were in those bright days; if I could paint the life of purity and innocence, and sweet unselfishness which you led, there are none I think who would not be the better for looking on the picture!

This was the girl into whose society Gerald now found himself unexpectedly thrown. The doctor had answered for the fact that our hero, in his present mood, would not fall in love with Nellie. Surely the worthy old gentleman ought to have known better than

to have committed himself to any such rash engagement. Nevertheless, Gerald did not fall in love with Nellie, in these days of his visit to her uncle's. Like many other men he made the blunder of regarding her and treating her as a child.

It was a quiet home life which was led in that peaceful Northumbrian house by the doctor and his wife and niece. It reminded Gerald of life at the Eaves House; though it was, of course, life on a more unpretending scale than in the home of the great statesman. It differed too from the life which was led there, inasmuch as there were no terrible boys of the family to make another boy's life miserable. Nellie was everything and everywhere. When he looked out of his bedroom window in the early morning, Gerald saw her with a gipsy hat on her head, and a pair of huge gardening gloves on her tiny hands, busy with rake or hoe amongst her favourite flowers; Vic faithfully attending her footsteps, save when he scampered off to charge the wary sparrows picking up a breakfast on the lawn. In the forenoon she was ready to accompany Gerald to one of the few picturesque spots to be found in the neighbourhood, Vic still following her, and Gerald carrying the basket which she never failed to bring home loaded with wild-flowers and ferns; and always in the evening she was by her uncle's side, sometimes reading to him, sometimes singing, always, however, brightening everybody by her presence.

Before Gerald had been three days at the doctor's, he had learned to miss Nellie when she was absent from the room, and was the first to greet her with a smile when she returned. Still there was not love, nothing like the devouring passion he had felt for Laura, on his part, towards her. It was always as a child that he regarded her. She was so gay, so innocent, so childlike in every thought and word and act, that it seemed like a desecration to associate her with those cares of life which never fail to tread hard upon love's footsteps.

How Gerald wished that he could have had two such sisters as Nellie and Mary.

The happy hours he spent at the doctor's did much to restore the balance of his mind. It did not, indeed, lead him to throw aside his determination to live for duty rather than for selfish pleasure; but it showed him, what some enthusiasts are too apt to forget, that a man may often increase the happiness of others far more by quietly living the life in which God has placed him, accepting its roses and its thorns alike without a murmur, than by making any of those heroic sacrifices of self which are apparently so much more noble and magnanimous in their character.

Nellie's genial presence, the sunshine which she shed everywhere around her, the laughter with which she made the quiet



house ring in every corner; and the patient kindly benevolence which distinguished the doctor in every relationship of life, taught him this lesson.

I hardly know whether Dr. Adamson was pleased or disappointed with the result of Gerald's stay at his house. Upon the whole, however, I think he was satisfied. He saw that the lad took a deeper interest in life when he left, than when he went there, and that the morbid self-consciousness which had been left as the result of his illness had almost entirely vanished.

Gerald could not have believed it possible a fortnight before that he could have regretted so much his leaving the doctor's friendly roof as he actually did. He had gone there almost unwillingly. Now after a fortnight spent in the midst of the little family, he felt as though he were leaving home again, and nothing but the recollection that he was about to return to the quiet companionship of Mary, reconciled him to the thought of going back to lodgings.

Nellie's face was not so bright as usual on that last morning of his visit. They had enjoyed together so many pleasant rambles, Gerald had assisted her so often in gardening, and had laughed so heartily at the tricks which Vic had played at her command, he had shown himself on every occasion so kind and pleasant a companion, that when Nellie came into the breakfast-room that morning, and the thought flashed upon her that Gerald's last day with them had arrived, the tears started unbidden to her eyes.

Did Gerald see how those blue eyes glistened? I think he must have done so; and seeing this, he was doubtless confirmed in his opinion that Nellie was a charming child and nothing more. So as he talked over the pleasures which they had enjoyed together during that bright fortnight, his voice assumed the soothing but patronizing tones wherewith men comfort children.

But he was rather disconcerted when Nellie refused to acknowledge that she stood in need of any such consolation; and when, almost before her eyes had ceased to glisten, she was laughing her old merry laugh, and inciting Vic to an attack upon Gerald's boots. Decidedly Nellie was a child thought our hero—but she was at the same time a somewhat peculiar one.

She had ceased to laugh, however, when the doctor's old-fashioned trap was at the door; and when Gerald shook hands with her at parting, though she smiled again as brightly as ever, her eyes had once more the liquid depth and brilliance which he had seen there in the morning.

Mary greeted him on his return to Moorfell, with the grave, almost motherly tenderness, which distinguished her conduct to-

wards him ever since his illness, and which the difference of years between them fully warranted on her part.

Gerald, full of the life he had been leading during the past fortnight, soon took her into his confidence, and Mary listened patiently to all he had to say; his story ending with a penitent burst of self-accusation against himself, for having forgotten to study "Thomas à Kempis" on that last morning before he left the doctor's.

Mary smiled when she heard this. "Never mind!" she said, "there are sometimes better lessons to be learnt in life than any you can learn from books, and I think you have been learning one of these lessons during your visit."

"I hope I have, Mary! I have enjoyed my visit immensely, and it will make my recollection of it all the pleasanter if I can think that I learned some useful lessons from it."

"I think you have learned how blessed a thing a cheerful unselfishness, like that which Miss Adamson always shows, is. No one can be long in her company without feeling as though the sun shone more brightly upon her and around her, than it does upon others."

"She's the most charming—child," said Gerald, "that I ever met with."

"You are like all other men, Mr. Lumley. You make the mistake of supposing that no girl can be a woman until she has lost the innocence of childhood. You mistake deference to etiquette for a proof of maturity of feeling. I dare say you wonder how I should presume to talk of men in this way," said Mary, warming; "but although I am so much of a prisoner, and although the men I have seen here belong, for the most part, to what society thinks a class almost unworthy of notice, both what I have read and what I have seen, convince me that one of the greatest misfortunes the world labours under is the inability of most men to understand the character of women."

"But what has that to do with Miss Adamson, who seems to be on perfectly good terms with all mankind, and for whom I at least have the highest possible regard?"

"You spoke of her just now as a child. It happens that I have seen a good deal of her, and a more womanly woman I never knew."

Gerald did not care to pursue the argument, for in truth he *did* think of Nellie as a child—a very sweet and charming child no doubt—but still one who could be nothing to him in that new life of self-denial upon which he wished to enter.

"And so the doctor's little plot has not turned you from your purpose," continued Mary, when she saw that Gerald was disin-

clined to continue the discussion about Nellie. "You still wish to live for others rather than yourself."

"I should like to do so, but I think the doctor's plot has had one effect; it has shown me how terribly hard even the smallest acts of self-sacrifice may be."

"Ah! there is no doubt of that. Those who live for others must fight a daily and hourly battle with themselves."

"Yes, they must," said Gerald; and then, a sudden thought striking him, he continued, "Mary, will you tell me something about your own life. Have you ever had trials and struggles such as those through which I have passed?"

"All of us have our own trials and struggles. Yours have been terribly severe ones of their kind, but there can be no one who has not suffered from fate, and been tormented at times by the mystery of life."

"But will you tell me your history?" persisted Gerald.

"Oh, my story," said Mary, "is a very simple one. I am an orphan, and I know very little about my parents. My mother died soon after I was born; my father I never saw. I don't know whether there is or is not a mystery connected with my birth. When I was a little girl, and read novels, I sometimes thought there was. I never trouble my head about it now, for whatever the mystery is it will never be revealed." Mary sighed, and an unusual expression of pain rested on the sweet, calm face as she uttered these words.

"I have my own theory about my father and mother's married life," she continued, presently. "Perhaps it is all fancy, but I think that my father was not a man with whom it was possible for a woman to live happily, and that my mother suffered from his unkindness. As to myself, I was strong and active until I was thirteen years old. Nobody of my age could have been stronger or more active; but then came a dreadful illness, which left me as you see me, lame and deformed."

Gerald's eye softened as he looked at her, and listened to the simple story told without a touch of self-consciousness.

"You must not feel sorry for me," said Mary, noting the expression of his face. "It was a dreadful trial at first, of course, but I think now it was God's greatest mercy to me. It has set me aside from the active world, and has opened up to me other worlds which are far more pleasant to me. Besides which I have had time for study and reading, such as I never could have had if I had been strong and well. Do you think I should ever have learned to like 'Thomas à Kempis' as well as I do if I had been merely the healthy, busy schoolmaster's niece? And then you know it has shown me how much kindness there is in the world. People who



suffer as I do see far more of the kindness of which there is so much around us than those who do not need that kindness so much."

"And have you lived here alone all your life without any companions but your bachelor uncle?"

"I have lived here all my life, but I have not been alone. I have had my books"—and Mary turned smiling to the little bookcase with its well-worn volumes—"and I have had some one else who was very dear to me, and whom I have no longer."

Gerald saw how deeply moved she was as she spoke of this lost friend, and he forbore to question her further.

## GEMS FROM CLASSIC MINES, No. IV.

*Horace III., Ode IX.*

HORACE.

WHILE I was lovely in thine eyes, and yet  
 None other youth preferred to me did throw  
 Round thy fair neck his arms, happy I lived :  
 The Persian monarch no such bliss did know.

LYDIA.

Long as none other maiden shared thy heart,  
 Nor Chloë shone preferred to me, the while  
 With name illustrious as the Vestal maid,  
 Ilia, by thee proud would I sit and smile.

HORACE.

Now Thracian Chloë holds me in fond chain,  
 Fair queen of verse, mistress of melody ;  
 If but the Fates my soul will spare, for her  
 Fain would I live, for her I fain would die.

LYDIA.

I too can love ; and Thurian Calais  
 Inflames my bosom with congenial fire :  
 If but the Fates will spare the youth I love,  
 Twice would I mount content the funeral pyre.

HORACE.

What if our ancient love once more return  
 And with fond link two hearts rebind amain ?  
 If auburn Chloë from my hearth be spurn'd,  
 And injur'd Lydia cross my doors again ?

LYDIA.

Though he is brighter than the noonday sun,  
 You light as cork and fickle as the sky  
 That smiles on Adria's waves, with thee alone  
 Fain would I live, and fain with thee would die.

## TWO DAYS AT RAVENNA.

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I EARNESTLY advise all those persons who are more especially interested in ecclesiastical history, to turn aside, if only for one day, from the beaten track usually pursued by travellers hurrying southwards, and to devote at least a few hours to visiting this unique city of the past. Several days might indeed be well devoted to the study of its many interesting remains, both of church architecture and of art. They will well repay the trouble. My companion and myself look back with more pleasure on the time we passed there, than that with which we recall our visit to any other city in North Italy, which is saying much. It seems to me that Ravenna furnishes the key to the Christian monuments in Rome, and with this great advantage, that it has happily been allowed to remain in its pristine condition, unaltered, unadorned, and now comparatively deserted. When we consider also that it was once the capital of the Western Empire, afterwards of the Gothic and Longobardic Kings, and then of the Greek Exarchs, Ravenna must claim more than ordinary attention from the students of history in general. A Roman colony was founded there at a very early period, and it is mentioned by Cicero as a naval station in the time of Pompey. That appears a singular statement now, for the sea has receded to a distance of some four or five miles, and there is a forest of stone pines, one of the marvels of Italy, between the city as it now stands and the shore. But anciently it was built on wooden piles in the midst of a vast lagune or swamp, and it is said that not only was communication with the surrounding country kept up by means of numerous barges, but also with various parts of the city itself.

Augustus afterwards constructed a port for 250 ships, but the true interest of Ravenna does not commence till after the classical age. Honorius in 404 A.D. chose it to be the capital of the Western Empire, and the sea having already begun to retreat, and the pine forest to take the place of the port, he established himself amongst the canals and the swamps, adding artificial to natural fortifications, and thus hoped to resist the advance of the barbarians. Seventy years after his death, however, they came under Odoacer, and he in his turn was overthrown by Theodoric, King of the Ostro-Goths, whose rifled mausoleum still remains. The



last of Theodoric's successors was expelled by Belisarius, the celebrated Roman general, under Justinian, the first Greek Exarch, whose functions under the Byzantine sovereignty somewhat resemble those of the ancient Prætorian Prefects. Their government extended over the whole of Italy, including even Rome, which was considered a sort of barony governed by its Bishop or Pope, but still under Greek authority—we found a trace of this idea still remaining amongst the people, as I will relate by-and-bye. This state of things continued for nearly two hundred years, till Astolphus, King of the Lombards, drove out the last of the Exarchs, and, not contented with this success, attempted also to take Rome as a dependency. He thus brought down upon himself the powerful army of the Franks, under Pepin and Charlemagne, and Ravenna was given by the former, with the whole of the Romagna, as a temporal possession to the Holy See. Several times after this the city changed her rulers. In the thirteenth century she was governed on republican principles, till one of the Traversari family proclaimed himself Duke without changing the form of government. His son who succeeded him was deposed by the Emperor Frederick the Second, and shortly afterwards the city was seized by Pope Innocent the Fourth.

In the fourteenth century the Polenta family made themselves Lords of Ravenna, till they became so odious to the citizens, that they threw themselves under the protection of Venice, and so remained with a short interval, till, in 1530, they were finally handed over to Rome by the treaty of Bologna. As is well known, after the war of 1859-60, Ravenna was incorporated into the kingdom of Italy. Christianity was first introduced here by St. Apollinaris, said, in the legend of his life, to have been the personal friend and disciple of St. Peter, who sent him on a mission from Rome to found this church. He remained here for twenty-nine years, baptizing his converts, and celebrating mass in a cottage on the shore, till his martyrdom under Vespasian. St. Ursus, Archbishop, 400 A.D., erected the first regular church, and his successors appear to have paid great attention to church architecture and adornment. In no other city do we find so many and such rich specimens of mosaic, not even in Rome. This is an art peculiarly adapted for religious effect, and the introduction of which, in my humble opinion, is much to be wished for in our own country. The durability of the material and colour renders them singularly suitable to the purposes to which they have been applied, and the grand figures which they portray, even when very rudely executed, have a strange solemnity of their own; they stand out at a distance, or in the waning light of evening, as no painting could ever do, and consequently in some situations are much more appropriate,

and appeal much more forcibly to the imagination of the multitude.

This art\* is of very early origin, and may possibly have been alluded to in the book of Esther, when we read of "a pavement of red and blue and white and black marble" (chap. i. 6); at all events it seems to have been borrowed by the Greeks from the Egyptians, and again by the Romans from the Greeks. At first small cakes of stone and terra cotta were employed, but later a vitrified substance of various colours, and often gilt, as the Byzantines often placed their figures on a gold ground. The age of a mosaic may be determined by the composition, the drawing, and the nature of the materials employed; they were used universally by the Romans, in whatever country they might settle; at first for pavements, and in the fourth century for historical and religious subjects; they are especially valuable, as, from the indestructibility of the materials by time, it is easy to trace not only many of the religious ideas of those times, but the introduction of some of the leading corruptions which gradually crept into the Church. Those at Ravenna are larger than those at Rome, and are put together with more care; and Ravenna, as all the world knows, is situated on the Adriatic, at the end of a railway which leads to nowhere else. The journey thither from Bologna is between four and five hours in length, and as far as Castel-Bolognese is the main line to Ancona. At this place there is usually a detention of some time, as from thence to Ravenna is a branch line, with four or five unimportant stations upon it. The country through which it passes would generally be said to be very uninteresting,—a succession of rich corn fields, not one square yard apparently higher in elevation than another, planted with pollard apple trees, up which the vines were trained; and I was much delighted in observing the very graceful festoons in which they hung in rich luxuriance from one tree to another. In this part of the country, as around Naples, other fruit trees are used as a support to the vines, instead of the bare poles—whether short, as in Germany, or tall, as in the South of France, or split up and placed transversely on other poles, as in the North of Italy; and the effect of the vine leaves mingled with the foliage of the apple trees, and the lighter green of the young corn beneath, produced a variety and intensity of verdure most refreshing to the eye, which would have delighted a painter. We saw it in the month of May: in the autumn, when the corn is golden, the apples red, and the grapes purple and

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\* It is an art which Ghirlandaio might well call the only painting for eternity.

yellow, and the foliage still more varied in colouring, the effect must be still more beautiful.

We did not arrive at Ravenna till late, and were disgusted to find that the best rooms in the best hotels were already occupied; and as English visitors are rare, and evidently no more were expected, we had to wait until our rooms were prepared; the accommodation, though rough, was clean, the landlord himself showing the way, and receiving our orders. In an unguarded moment we ordered tea, which he said, of course, we could have, and with it he proposed the universal roast fowl, and some sea trout. Hungry and tired we waited patiently for our supper, whilst the beds were prepared, and the supper things placed on the table, for it appeared that we could not be served in the *table d'hôte* room, and there was no saloon. In due time the master reappeared with the promised viands, and two large steaming jugs, which proved to be a decoction of so vile a nature, that one experimental spoonful was enough; at the risk of hurting his feelings, which was positively unavoidable, if we really did so, we were obliged to ring the bell for some wine, to enable us to proceed with the repast. E—— told him it was not the tea such as we had in England, but the good man persisted that he had bought it expressly for English travellers. If they will be warned by me, they will not ask for it—it is evidently a mixture of dried herbs.

The next morning we sallied forth, having secured the services of a *valet de place*, who declared that he perfectly understood French. His knowledge, however, comprised simply the names of churches; beyond this he was utterly at sea. We had provided ourselves fortunately with a book lately published by Mr. Charles Hemans, entitled, “A History of Ancient Christianity and Sacred Art in Italy,” one chapter of which is devoted to Ravenna; and by his help we were led to remark many things which would certainly have otherwise escaped our observation. He suggests also a chronological order of visiting the various monuments, which we carried out, and which I will now follow in attempting to describe all that we saw. The first in order, and the only remaining edifice of the fourth century, which is still unaltered, is the Baptistery, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and founded in 380 A.D. by St. Ursus. It is an octagonal building, standing close to, but quite distinct from, the Cathedral. In the midst, under the cupola, stands a grand vase of porphyry and white marble, which was formerly used for baptisms; on one side is a recess evidently intended for the officiating priest to stand in during the ceremony. The rich mosaics with which the building is adorned are of a later date, about 430, or, according to another authority, 451. On the cupola are depicted the figures of the Saviour and St. John, the



former receiving, the latter conferring, the rite of baptism, as they are usually treated; but a curious figure appears in the background, which I should never have comprehended by my unassisted judgment, and is intended to represent the river-god Jordan. Crowe and Cavalletski observe regarding this figure: "It is necessary to point out how difficult it was for artists living in memories of the Pagan past, to conceive such a subject as the baptism of Christ, in the form most fitted to satisfy religious aspirations."

Underneath, and carried round the cupola like a frieze, are the twelve apostles, robed, some in tunics of cloth of gold and white palliums, others in white tunics and golden palliums, but all wearing a high cap, resembling a mitre, and each carrying a crown or garland of leaves in one hand, with this difference, that while the crown of St. Peter is red, that of St. Paul is gold: this certainly does not indicate that at that early period there existed that belief in the superiority of the Prince of the Apostles which now prevails—a circumstance which I may remark, *en passant*, is also confirmed by one of the newly discovered frescoes in the church of St. Clement's, at Rome, where, though the figures are headless, one intended for St. Peter, plainly dressed with sandal shoes, is standing on a lower step than Linus, who, richly robed, and with embroidered shoes, is seated on a chair of state.

But to return to the Battisteria. Below the figures of the apostles, between the arcades of the Triforium, are symbolic designs of peculiar character, altars, on each of which is laid a palm, or lily, and the gospels, on rich cushions, as they used to be displayed at the Œcumenical Councils. The ancient pavement is said to be more than eighteen feet below the present flooring. In a recess on one side is an urn of Parian marble, found in the temple of Jupiter at Cæsarea.

The next in order of antiquity is the small church of St. Nazarus and Celsus, chiefly interesting as being the mausoleum of the Empress Gallia Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great, and mother of Valentinian the Third. It is small, in the form of a Latin cross, with a cupola, which, as well as the upper part of the walls, is entirely covered with mosaics, the finest specimens of the art now extant. They are of the time of the empress herself—440 A.D.—and are beautiful, not so much in point of size, for they are comparatively small, as in fineness of execution. There are the Good Shepherd with his sheep, the Prophets, the Saviour with a cross and the Gospels in His hand, and not far off, a grid-iron with a fire underneath it, which, it is thought, refers to the burning of the books of Nestorian heresy after the Council of Ephesus. Mr. Hemans remarks that this is the first instance of religious in-

tolerance recorded in art. The only altar in the church stands in the centre, and is of oriental alabaster. But the great object of attraction is the marble sarcophagus containing the ashes of the empress. It was once covered with silver plating, long since vanished. Gallia Placidia was buried sitting upright in a chair of cypress wood, and dressed in her most gorgeous robes, after the fashion of those times. For a long time the corpse might be seen through an orifice in the back of the tomb; but in 1577 some mischievous little urchins threw a lighted taper into it, and these singular relics were burnt to ashes. The tombs of Honorius, her brother, Constantius, her husband, and Valentinian, her son, are in the same chapel. The husband and son occupy one sarcophagus together. They are about the same size as Placidia's, but are sculptured with some rude Christian symbols, lambs, palms, doves, and the sacred monogram. And it is worthy of remark that these are the only tombs of the Cæsars which have been suffered to remain undisturbed. Gallia Placidia built this mausoleum about ten years before her death. She was, as I have said, the daughter of Theodosius, and for some years Empress-Regent during the minority of her son Valentinian. She was born at Constantinople, and died in Rome, and lived to be a Gothic Queen, a Roman Empress, was twice made captive by barbarian armies, and once had to walk on foot before the triumphal car of her first husband's murderer. She was a woman of great talent, but cruel and ambitious, whose vices preclude all sympathy with her misfortunes.

Nevertheless, Ravenna was much indebted to her munificence, for she also founded the churches of San Giovanni Battista, and the Basilica of San Giovanni Evangelista. The former was built for her confessor, in 438, but subsequently almost entirely rebuilt. The latter dates from A.D. 425, and also retains little of its original splendour, though its ancient columns and the high altar are still preserved. The church was built in fulfilment of a vow, made when the empress was nearly shipwrecked in a voyage from Constantinople to Ravenna; and there is a curious legend that when she was vainly seeking a relic of St. John to place under the high altar, the apostle himself appeared to her, as if offering incense. She rushed forward to embrace his feet, when he disappeared, leaving his sandal in her hand. This vision, and the scene of the storm, are represented on a bas-relief over the western door, a work of the thirteenth century. In the chapel on the left are some frescoes by Giotto, representing the four Latin doctors and the evangelists.

The little chapel of Saint Peter Chrysologus, in the archiepiscopal palace, was the next we visited. We rang at a bell, and were received by an old servant, who apologized that everything

was in disorder, as his master, the new archbishop, had not yet been installed in his see. He was expected daily, and was then going off again to Rome, to assist at the Grand Canonization, of which all the world has heard, and at which it appeared in his estimation the presence of the Archbishop of Ravenna was more absolutely necessary than that of even the Pope himself. He led us through one or two rooms, and up some rotten, dilapidated stairs, into a small but very interesting and highly ornamented little church. It is in the form of a T. Over the altar is a mosaic of the Virgin and Child, said to be considerably more modern than those which adorn the walls. It is supposed to be of the twelfth century, and to have been brought from the last cathedral. The others are of the fifth century, and have remained untouched since the days when St. Peter Chrysologus worshipped within these walls. In giving a description of them, of which they are worthy, I think I cannot do better than quote Mr. Heman's words :

“Above a marble incrustation round the lower part expands that field of mosaics in brilliant hues unfaded, as the quaint and massive architecture is alike intact, since the days when the emperors of a ruined state trifled away their fear-stricken lives at Ravenna. Not yet is any subordinate personage allowed prominence in the sacred grouping ; not yet has the worship of the Saviour been disputed by that of the Madonna and saints. His form is everywhere conspicuous and central here ; represented as at different ages, but always at once recognisable. We see Him as a young boy with the twelve apostles in a series of medallion heads ; we see him again as a youth of about eighteen years, with the same benignly beautiful features more developed, and again as a fully matured man, still mild and noble-looking, in costume like that of a Greek emperor, with tunic of gold tissue, purple chlamys with jewelled clasp at the shoulder, in one hand a long red cross, in the other a volume open at the words of most blessed assurance, ‘*Ego sum Via, Veritas et Vita.*’ His head alone among all here before us is crowned with the nimbus, and striking indeed is the superiority, the majestic benignity that distinguishes the Divine subject as here conceived by art, compared with the repulsive aspect given to its form in another mosaic treatment of the same year, 440, at the Ostian Basilica, near Rome. On the vault of this venerable chapel are the usual winged symbols of the evangelists, each with a jewelled book, and at the centre the holy monogram in a disc, supported on the uplifted arms of four angels, majestic creatures in long white vestments, whose countenances express a kind of awful joy.”

I cannot conscientiously affirm that I myself saw as much expression in these quaint old mosaics as is described in this quota-



tion, nor did E——, but I suppose Mr. Hemans looked at them with the same enthusiastic fervour as did a good hermit of old, of whom he tells a pretty legend, how a holy anchorite, in some eastern desert, prayed earnestly that he might be permitted to behold some true representation of the Saviour, as He had appeared on earth. It was at last revealed to him in a vision, that at Ravenna his prayer would be granted, and that he should there find the likeness he so longed to see. He travelled thither, attended by two tame lions, and after having carefully looked at all the pictures on the sacred walls, at last came to one which an inner voice assured him was no other than the likeness of the Lord. Kneeling in rapture before it, and overwhelmed with emotion, his soul ebbed away in devout joy. The citizens gave him honourable burial, and the faithful lions, crouching one at the head, the other at the foot of his grave, soon grieved to death, and were buried beside their master. The legend does not say which picture it was in particular that so moved the old monk's feelings, but E—— and I decided that it must have been that above described in this little chapel, where Christ is depicted with the red cross and the open volume.

Omitting one or two churches of minor importance, we come to St. Apollinan Nuovo, celebrated as containing a series of the finest specimens of mosaics in Italy. It was built in the sixth century as an Arian Cathedral, and was at first dedicated to St. Martin; when, however, Pope John IX., a century later, transferred the relics of St. Apollinaris, for greater safety, from the extramural basilica, it was named after that Saint. It is a building of noble proportions; the nave is supported by twenty-four columns of grey cippoline, forming two side aisles, and on the walls above, are clerestories on either side, and occupying the whole length of the church is a procession of majestic figures. That on the left or north side consists of a train of virgin saints, twenty-two in number, each with her name inscribed, with the prefix *Sca*, all dressed alike in richly embroidered robes, with veil and mantle, and gems in their hair, and carrying jewelled crowns in their hands. Amongst this virgin company are several well-known names: St. Agatha, St. Agnes, and St. Cecilia, but many with whom we were not acquainted, and who I believe are seldom depicted in art: St. Victoria, St. Veleria, &c. They are preceded by the three Magi, one of whom is the traditional negro, and all are advancing to the object of their adoration—the Virgin—seated on a throne with the Holy Child on her lap, and attended by four angels with wands, rather grotesque, I must say, in white. This mosaic is considered peculiarly interesting, as it affords one of the earliest instances of the great corruption of the Roman Church,

which appears to have crept in, and to have developed itself even at this early period. I mean the veneration felt for, and worship given to the Blessed Virgin herself. She is here represented as raising her hand in the act of benediction, as does the Divine Infant on her knee, though, unlike Him, her head is surrounded only by the same nimbus as those of the saints who approach her. *He* alone wears a cruciform nimbus of three rays. On the opposite side of the church is a similar procession of male saints, among whom are seen St. Clement and St. Cornelius, bishops of Rome, and several of the martyrs; they too are dressed alike, and advance from a building, which is clearly intended for the palace of Theodoric, in the city, to a majestic figure of the Saviour Himself, who sits on a throne, and is attended by four angels similar to those I have already mentioned. The last figure, that of St. Stephen, has been taken out, and the space filled up—it must have stood very close to the throne. Above these again is a series of smaller subjects, very insignificant as compared to the larger ones, of emblematic designs, &c.

The Arian baptistery was also built by Theodoric, and is now called Santa Maria in Cosundia. It is less interesting than that already described. The mosaics are of the sixth century, and inferior in execution, and the marble basin for immersions, which originally stood in the centre, has disappeared. The baptism of our Lord is again the subject depicted on the cupola, but the figures are uncouth, and the Jordan issues from an urn supported by the river-god; below are the twelve apostles, St. Peter bearing the keys, St. Paul with two scrolls: all advance in procession towards a throne on cushions, on which is raised a jewelled cross.

We now come to the period of the reign of the Emperor Justinian, that most enlightened and liberal potentate, whose beneficence did not enrich Ravenna alone, but every town in his dominion. The greatest monument of his taste and munificence in this city is undoubtedly the Basilica of St. Vitalo, a martyred soldier, who was buried alive on this spot, and over whose remains there was originally a small oratory, which gave place to the magnificent church still standing. Its nave is of octagonal form, with a chancel or choir leading out of it. Around the nave are eight arches, resting on as many piers, with a double row of arcades above, supporting a cupola or dome of the same diameter as the nave. It is said to have been built in imitation of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and to have furnished a model for Charlemagne's cathedral at Aix la Chapelle. The interior is lined with rich marbles and adorned with various monograms; but the great interest consists in the rich mosaics adorning and covering the walls of the chancel, and the visitor is hardly prepared to expect

such glories from the plainness of the exterior of the church. Notwithstanding that critics have pronounced them inferior in execution and design to those I have already described at St. Peter Chrysologus and St. Giovanni Nuovo, I yet venture to hold my opinion that they are at least as majestic, and as effective. Mr. Hemans says that they are in some respects unique in Italian churches. Round the arch are a series of medallion heads, the Saviour in the middle, on one side several representations of scenes from the Old Testament History: the sacrifices of Abel and Melchisedek, in which both figures advance towards an altar over which a chalice and loaves of bread are laid; Abraham offering up Isaac; Abraham entertaining the three strangers, &c.; on the other side are several scenes from the life of Moses; but the larger series are in the tribune, and are as fresh as the day they were placed here. On the left is the Emperor Justinian, holding a vase like a bowl, which is supposed to contain his offering at the consecration of the new church. He is attended by three courtiers, and beyond are the Archbishop and two priests; the former bears a jewelled cross, not a crucifix, one of the priests a censer; and beyond these again is a guard of soldiers. The Emperor is richly habited, and the ecclesiastics in white. On the opposite side is the Empress Theodora, with a similar vase, attended by the ladies of her court, and advancing towards a door hung with the curtains. She is gorgeously dressed with long strings of pearls hanging from her diadem over her richly embroidered robes; and it is singular that both the royal pair are represented with a nimbus round their heads, which is not given to any of the other figures. The countenances are evidently intended to be likenesses; and I should say that, even allowing for the unfavourable medium by which they are handed down to posterity, they must have been unprepossessing-looking persons. Theodora was a pantomime actress, of far from unblemished reputation in her youth, yet when raised to the position of Empress of the West, she was blameless, excepting in that she was a great political intriguer; and that she died penitent for the sins of her early days we may infer from the fact that she was the first to found a Magdalene Asylum.

Before leaving St. Vitalo, I may just mention the celebrated bas-reliefs called the Throne of Neptune; they are comparable with the finest works of antiquity, and are of Greek origin. One very interesting tomb also is worthy of remark; that of Isaac, eighth Exarch of Ravenna, erected to his memory by his widow, Susanna, about 649.

The whole place, despite its grandeur, had a most deserted look, which was quite melancholy; and this may be said also of



all those churches I have already described. It seems as if they were all carefully preserved as relics of the past, and never made use of for religious purposes. I believe that mass is occasionally celebrated in them, but they are evidently not frequented by the people for private prayer, as is the modern cathedral; and the absence of the lamp before the high altar showed that the host was not present. The reverse struck us much in the more modern churches. One very plain and comparatively modern church, St. Maria in Poito, is remarkable as containing a famous and miraculous image of the Madonna. The sacristan asked if we wished to see it, which of course we did; he proceeded to light two candles before a small shrine above an altar in a side chapel; and when this was done, he drew the curtain aside, thus displaying to view a small figure of the Virgin and Child, very rudely cut in white marble, now yellow from age. It was so little sculptured as to be almost a bas-relief, and was strikingly ugly. The custode, as well as our valet de place, was very irreverent, to my way of thinking, for though he lighted the candles in due form, he never bowed to her when the curtain was withdrawn, but chatted away to us and turned his back upon her within the altar rails.

"This Madonna," said he, "is much liked; she is very kind, much kinder than the other (one in another church we never saw) who is the favourite of the poor people, and is all very well for them, but not for people of good condition like *this*. She floated on the sea from Constantinople, attended by two angels bearing torches, and touched the shore near the ancient port of *Classis*, where she was received by the bishop and clergy, and lodged in a temporary chapel, until the church of St. Maria in Poito was built for her." It appears that she was removed here in the sixteenth century, when that church with the surrounding suburb was destroyed. The sacristan then invited us to approach nearer, that we might see her better. At first we hesitated, as we always made a point of not showing disrespect, as far as possible, to what the people hold sacred; but the little man insisted, and made us go up several small steps behind the altar, so that we were close upon her. It is evidently a Byzantine figure, and is considered one of the earliest specimens of Christian art. I should say it had originally been intended for a tomb, at all events to lie in a horizontal position, not to be stuck up in a glass-case as at present.

In the church of San Dominico is another curious thing of a like character—a crucifix, the figure the size of life: it is kept in a small chapel by itself, and from being under glass is very difficult to see. I had to mount up and look closely to see anything at all. "Murray" says it is covered with fine linen, in imitation of

human skin, and the legend affirms that it sweated blood during the battle of Ravenna. Moreover, the custode very gravely assured us that a fire happening to break out at the same time in the church, the figure was in great danger of being burnt, when it suddenly drew up one of the legs as if in pain, and the fire soon afterwards went out. We could discern certainly that such was the position of the feet, but not more so than is often to be noticed in many representations of the same subject, both in painting and sculpture.

There now remains but one church of antique interest to be visited, but it claims an attention quite as great as those I have already noticed. It was a pleasant change after our hard morning's work and our luncheon, to engage a quaint little antediluvian carriage, and to drive out over a positive swamp, some two miles out of the city. St. Apollinaris, in Chaese, is now deserted and alone, standing at the edge of the pine forest mentioned above as having encroached upon the sea. I can hardly give an idea of the utter desolation of its situation; not a habitable cottage is within sight; nothing but the flat marshy land, with the roofs and campaniles of Ravenna in the horizon on one side, and the pines stretching far away into the distance on the other. The loneliness is quite appalling; yet there stands the old Basilica, once the centre of a populous neighbourhood, the scene of many gorgeous solemnities, and crowded with devout worshippers; now forsaken. The only human creatures we could see were the peasant custodes, who appeared to linger about in hope of earning a few francs from visitors, and some little ragged urchins, evidently of the same speculative turn of mind, who offered us beautiful white water-lilies, of which there were many in the ponds hard by. We were quite glad to see them—the boys I mean—and to hear their chattering; for, excepting their voices, and the slight noise made by the horse and driver at the door, not a sound was to be heard but the croaking of frogs.

The interior is simple, being of red brick, and not remarkable, save for its circular campanile. The interior is large and majestic, with two aisles, divided from the nave by twenty-four pillars of grey marble, and supporting a clerestory as at St. Apollinare in Nuovo. The whole place looks and feels damp and mouldy.

In the centre of the nave is a square altar which bears an inscription, telling how the saint to whom the church is dedicated, and whose body once reposed below, appeared twice on this spot to young St. Romualdo, whilst he was keeping vigil there, and exhorted him to devote himself to a religious life. He afterwards did so, and became the founder of the Camaldolese order. Around the nave and aisles are medallions in mosaic and fresco of the

different archbishops of Ravenna, ancient and modern, but not remarkable as works of art, or trustworthy as portraits. The ashes of eight of these dignitaries are enclosed in as many sarcophagi of massive proportions, standing round the walls, which present examples of early Christian art in their decorations. The chancel is raised above the nave by several steps, and the mosaics here preserved form the chief interest of the church. On the vault of the apse is a most singular representation of the Transfiguration, which Mr. Hemans says is the first instance of the treatment of this subject on record, excepting in another mosaic at the convent of St. Catherine, on Mount Sinai, which is of the fourth century, whereas the date of this is supposed to be 533. It consists of a very huge cross, with a small head of the Saviour introduced in the middle, at the juncture of the arms. A hand is placed above, to indicate the first Person in the Trinity ; the heads of Moses and Elias are on each side, as their names are written by them, and below three sheep, to represent the apostles who witnessed the scene. There are trees and stars introduced, and a verdant plain. The cross is jewelled. On the arms are the Greek letters  $\Lambda$  and  $\Omega$ , and above several which are interpreted by Ciampini to be "*Immolatio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi.*" Underneath is the figure of Apollinaris in sacerdotal robes, either in attitude of prayer, or preaching to a congregation represented by twelve sheep. The whole is very grotesque, of course ; and the sheep closely resemble those of the "*Noah's ark*" of our childhood, whilst St. Apollinaris might personify Shem. Still it is very interesting and not less so are the smaller series of different subjects from scripture, &c., on the wall facing the nave.

There is a crypt below the chancel, in which is the sepulchral urn which once contained the ashes of the saint, afterwards transferred to beneath the high altar, and finally to St. Apollinari Nuovo : there is also a chapel and an altar on which stand four massive candlesticks in silver, very ancient, for which the custode said a very large sum had been offered and refused ; but if it is true that all the stones which adorn the sacred Bambino in Rome have been exchanged for paste, I am inclined to feel sceptical as to the value or antiquity of these candlesticks.

The Campanile is considered a fine example of the kind which are peculiar to Ravenna. It is circular, thirty-three feet in diameter at the base. Gentlemen may ascend for some distance by means of ladders, and obtain an extensive view of the sea beyond, the pine forest, the Appenines and the Alps. But we ladies did not attempt it ; so leaving this singular sanctuary we drove on a little further, wishing to inspect the forest near us. It is really a forest. You might with ease lose your way in it, for though it



varies only from two to four miles in breadth, it extends along the coast for nearly thirty miles. The ground is covered with birch, wood and heather, and we got out and walked some way, picking up the fallen cones. They are called *pinocchi*, and the driver told us that the forest is farmed out, but that the peasants have the right to pick up what they can. They are the source of a large revenue to the Government. I remember in Rome eating *boar* with pine-seed sauce, and served in good brown gravy. I can affirm it was far from bad.

Then we turned homewards, and passed the church again, where the door was shut and the custode gone. The sun was just setting, and the warm rays of rosy light, gilding the Campanile, only made it look more deserted and dreary. The road lay along what I may describe as dykes, for on each side was an expanse of rice-fields, part of them under water. We make a detour to see the monument raised to Gaston de Foix, between two and three miles out of the city, and standing by itself, a lonely pillar, on which a modern top had been placed. I think it was an urn, or something in equally bad taste. It is by the side of the road with a few trees surrounding it. The great battle of Ravenna, at which he fell, took place on Easter Sunday, 1512. The city was besieged by the French, who were repulsed until the arrival of Spanish and Papal reinforcements induced Gaston to offer battle outside the walls; but the victory then gained was dearly bought by the loss of the French commander.

Nor is Ravenna only rich in monuments of ages long past, both barbaric and early Christian; it is also the resting-place of Italy's greatest poet, Dante. The building is not worthy of the honoured remains it covers. It was only built in 1780, on the site of a former one. In 1865, at the time of his great sixcentenary anniversary, which was celebrated throughout Italy, it was accidentally discovered that the body of the poet had been taken out of the urn in which it had been originally deposited, and laid in a box which was bricked up in a wall near at hand. The skeleton corresponded in size to the description of Dante; and there can be no doubt that it was removed by the friar Antonio de Santi, in October 1677 (as set forth by an inscription on the box), out of fear that it might be taken possession of by the Florentines, who were very anxious to recover the ashes of their great countryman and convey them back to their native city. They were, however, speedily restored with much pomp to the mausoleum from which they had been extracted. As the very name of Dante is now considered the symbol of united Italy, and the box and the inscription is preserved in the museum, it may be interesting to mention the feelings with which three of the greatest literati in

modern times visited this sepulchre, each characteristic of his nation. Chateaubriand knelt down bareheaded before the tomb, Lord Byron laid upon it a copy of his works, and Alfieri prostrated himself before it and gave vent to his emotions in one of the finest sonnets in the Italian language.

Near the tomb of Dante is the house where Lord Byron lived for more than two years ; he appears to have made himself so popular, and his memory to be so much revered here, that the inhabitants have put up an inscription over it to record the fact of his residence. It was here that he made the acquaintance of the Countess Guiccioli, who suggested the " Prophecy of Dante ;" and here he wrote many of his works. He liked the place, its climate, its society, and its pine forest, better than any other out of his beloved Greece.

The next morning, after having paid a visit to these two spots of modern interest, we went through the Academy, where are many treasures. The library is a good one ; and in the recess of one of the deep bay windows sat an English gentleman, who, we were told, was compiling a new edition of Aristophanes' works. They showed us some old MSS., a volume in which Dante had made notes in the margin with his own hand, and a beautiful collection of coins. There are some few paintings also, but none worthy of especial notice. Indeed, the only picture which has remained on our minds at Ravenna was one in a modern church, by Guercino. The little side chapel in which it hung was draped with hangings in honour of some saint's day they had just been celebrating : consequently the picture itself was completely hidden, and in its place was exposed some trashy representation of the saint. We were bent upon seeing it, however, and offered to help the custode and our guide to dismantle the chapel. They were very good-natured, and immediately commenced doing so under E——'s superintendence, which drew forth from the custode the emphatic aside to a valet de place, " Cielo ! how well she understands Italian ;" and presently was disclosed to our delighted view a beautiful specimen of Guercino's best style—St. Romualdo in the attitude of prayer.

This church is the chapel of the college of Ravenna, once a convent ; and in the refectory of this is a beautiful fresco of the marriage at Cana, by Luca Longhi and his son Francesco, and the altars of the church are peculiarly rich in alabaster and Florentine mosaics.

Decidedly the most uninteresting church in Ravenna is the modern cathedral, almost entirely rebuilt on the foundations of the ancient one in the last century. It is a large whitewashed modern Italian structure, and is only worth visiting as containing

several pictures by Guido. Langi says they are amongst his finest works, but they are not well placed. They were celebrating mass whilst we were there, and certainly the congregation was larger than at any of the other churches. I cannot say much for their attention, however; for, although we were careful to keep in the side aisles and not to obtrude ourselves in front of the worshippers, we observed that almost every female head certainly was turned upon us as we passed, and after we had passed, which I can only account for by the supposition that they rarely see strangers. To the feminine eyes among them I have no doubt that E——'s seal-skin coat and cap were objects of wonder and admiration, if not of awe; for several times in Italy we have overheard remarks concerning her to the effect that she must be a Russian lady of high degree!

There now only remained the mausoleum of Theodoric to be visited, a round building standing by itself a little way out of the city. Theodoric's remains no longer repose there, as the sepulchre was rifled by the Catholics to show their zealous intolerance of the Arian king. He built it for himself during his lifetime of blocks of limestone from Istria. It is decagonal, with two chambers or stories, the upper of which is supposed to have contained the sepulchral urn; and to this you ascend by a modern flight of steps from the outside. It is a handsome building, surrounded with arches, and probably in ancient times with columns and ornaments; but, although it has borne the three names successively as a church, it is now left to go to ruin, and the lower floor is two or three feet under water.

In returning to our hotel we passed the palace of Theodoric, or rather what little remains of it, incorporated into a modern building. The only ancient part is a high wall, with eight small marble columns in the upper part supporting seven arches, evidently intended to serve as windows and to be furnished with curtains to keep out the heat or cold, instead of glass. In the lower part, and built up into the wall is a marble sarcophagus, which some have supposed to be that which once contained the ashes of Theodoric in his mausoleum. It was found near it, certainly; otherwise there are better grounds for concluding it to be a bath. There is nothing to see inside this building. It was despoiled of all its mosaics and ornaments by Charlemagne, who carried them away to France.

We have now completed our tour of inspection of this most interesting city, which I trust has not disappointed the expectations which I may have raised on setting out. But what of its present status? its prosperity, its importance, and the feeling of its population?



From our chatting guide and the landlord of the inn we gleaned a few particulars, all showing not only that Ravenna is a city of the past, but that she aspires to be one of the future, should the opportunity ever be afforded to her. They told us that she has a population of 16,000 souls, many of them engaged in trade by means of a canal with Venice and other cities on the Adriatic, and that of these 3,600 enlisted in 1860 as volunteers in the Italian army. On that occasion almost every shop and office was closed, and many of the young men were put in prison on some trivial excuse to prevent their volunteering. They were then under the temporal dominion of the Pope; and consequently the priests here, as throughout the Romagna, did not favour the liberal party. They are all uneducated as a rule, and were even forbidden to learn French and English, as were all civilians of course. The landlord told us that he had felt the inconvenience exceedingly, and had been most anxious to have a French chambermaid in his inn for the accommodation of the "forestière;" but no! he was not allowed. *Now*, we understood, some of the people are beginning to learn a little French, but as yet their progress seems to have been so slow that I strongly advise no one to venture upon a visit here without at least arming himself with the rudiments of Italian, or he will hardly get anything he may want, still more will he lose many explanations which the inevitable "Murray" fails to give, besides various remarks and opinions not only amusing, but showing how mediæval traditions have not yet lost their hold over the minds of the people.

I will give the following conversation with our guide as an illustration. He heard us talking of the mosaics in Rome; E—— told him we had been there, but admired these far more. "And did you see the Bishop?" (Vescovo di Roma), inquired he. "Si," answered E——. "Il Santo Padre?" (the Holy Father.) "No. Non e Santo Padre, e maggiore vescovo." "Perchè?" enquired E—— with surprise. Then he explained emphatically that the only advantage the Pope enjoys is that Rome is a senior bishopric to Ravenna, and that therefore he takes precedence only as regards the seniority of his see—that if Ravenna had happened to have been the senior bishopric, the Pope would then have been an *archbishop* instead of simply bishop: this he argued would have been "molto piu grande," as a church dignity, whereas, in point of fact, Ravenna is now the greatest, because it is an archbishopric, and that St. Peter appointed to that see first before he could make himself Bishop of Rome. He further explained that no candidate for the Popedom can be finally elected until the Archbishop of Ravenna accepts him; that no pope can be consecrated until he attends to sanction the solemnity, and that in-

deed no great ceremony can take place—the approaching canonization for instance—without this important dignitary, or rather without his *crozier*, which is always used on state occasions, and which he always keeps by him. The good little man trotted on by our side, evidently well pleased to find a sympathizing ear into which he might pour the glorification of his native city; and it was quite clear that he believed all he said, but whence he obtained his information, or whether this is the universal creed of the people, I am unable to say.

Before leaving we ordered dinner, or more properly luncheon, and having agreed to the universal “*bif-tek*,” this dish duly appeared, but with the addition of a thick layer of anchovies. We had no choice but to experiment, and found it exceedingly good. I may here take the opportunity of recommending the inn l’Europa as clean and comparatively comfortable, with the most obliging of landlords. We were also told by a lady and gentleman whom we met at dinner that there was a very good theatre, which they visited.

We should gladly have lingered longer among the many interesting objects at Ravenna, but time compelled us to hasten on our homeward journey. Three or four days might well have been spent there, instead of two, though it is to those alone who take an interest in Christian antiquity that I would recommend a visit to this ancient city. Its desolate grass-grown streets, and the air of intense dulness which pervades the whole place, have little to attract the mere pleasure-seeking tourist, as the flat and monotonous country around has nothing to please an artistic eye. Still I would gladly impress upon English travellers that it has been too much neglected, and I would fain hope that this simple and imperfect sketch may induce many to follow our example, and pay if it be only a short visit to Ravenna.

## DESPAIR IN A CHURCHYARD.

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THE moonlight falls upon the tablets, where  
 Memorials of the dead—in stone—decay ;  
 'Tis a fit haunt for wild, but vain despair,  
 To wander and corrode the heart away.

The silent dead—the happy dead—what hushed  
 And stirless peace would seem their graves to fill ;  
 The pangs that tortured, memories that crushed,  
 Are in its sceptred presence mute and still.

The grass is green above their narrow homes,  
 The air is filled with life ;—to these beneath  
 Only the life of desolation comes,  
 The worm whose fold is Death's triumphant wreath.

Decay and dark Corruption--these are dread  
 And awful images to Nature's eye ;  
 But not to me, for with the withering dead  
 There is no thought—not even the wish to die.



## AUTHOR AND ACTRESS.

AN UNSYMMETRICAL NOVEL.

## BOOK II.

## CHAPTER VII.

“Oh, a thorough rascal,” said the snuffy little old gentleman, who received pupils in his front parlour, wore a trencher cap and gown, and called as much of the house as belonged to him a College. “Oh, a rank impostor. Some of the stories told about him are really shocking. And what is more, I am afraid there is only too much truth in them. He is a most notorious character; figured in the Divorce Court, and some of the details were quite unfit for publication: married the daughter of the proprietor of the Peacock Tavern, Holborn; treated her shamefully, beat her with a riding whip, and habitually used language towards her that was most disgusting. He was originally, I believe, a Congregationalist minister. I am telling you what has been told me, mind, but I have no reason to question the truth of the particulars. He fell into disgrace, and soon afterwards managed to impose on a clergyman of the established church, who engaged him as his curate. He behaved in the most outrageous manner, and was dismissed from his post for immorality. It was not long afterwards that he married. He now professes to be an ordained minister, and I am told conducts the services at his church in really a gorgeous style. The music there attracts crowds, and that Mr. Clifford is a clever and effective speaker even his enemies do not attempt to deny. His audacity is something wonderful; he actually administers the sacraments, and even, I believe, baptizes infants. Of course, being without any proper credentials, he is not entitled to do either. He formerly contributed articles to a London newspaper, and scamp as he is, he has the reputation of being a very excellent scholar. It is melancholy to think that such a perversion of talent can be possible. I am told his congregation is mainly composed of young men and young women, who devoutly believe in the rascal, and are convinced that what those who really know him say about his past life is mere

slander. He has a splendid house in Arlington Terrace, furnished, I am told, most luxuriously. He and an attorney named Slowman built the iron church on speculation. The lawyer advanced the money, and Mr. Clifford undertook the management of the concern. They hope to reimburse themselves by means of the offertory. Clifford is a most dishonest man, he has sent his children to school after school, and has not paid a sixpence anywhere until actually obliged to. He had the audacity to ask the bishop to consecrate his church, and of course met with a most proper refusal. The story he tells his congregation is that his lordship was imposed upon by the representations of the district clergy, and he declares that before long all difficulties will be satisfactorily cleared up. Oh, he is a thorough rascal, and it is sad to think of the influence he may gain over the silly and ill-judged young people who believe in him as an injured man."

Thus far the little tutor, but his denunciations are merely an echo of the anathemas that have been hurled by others in positions of greater authority, and whose influence with the public is or ought to be far more extensive.

The rector of St. Thingamy's denounced Mr. Clifford in a sermon. The incumbent of St. Botherwell's appealed to the tried supporters of Church and State in a local print of a circulation select though limited.

Many a sober-minded family man shook his head at the idea that even *his* young people might be imposed upon by the wolf in sheep's clothing who lurked in the fields. Maria and Charlotte-Ann laid their silly little heads together, and declared that Mr. Clifford was a "dear man," and in spite of ecclesiastical censure, crowds of the youthful and gay, greedy of excitement and false doctrine, tripped Sunday after Sunday across that debatable ground, sacred to pots and pans and mud and the *débris* of burnt bricks, with a gusto that roused more orthodox but less entertaining churchmen to a high pitch of moral indignation.

The newly established dancing-master, whose residence was at Arlington Terrace, No. 3, declared that the weekly entertainments given by his neighbour would sooner or later prove the ruin of him. "People won't join my classes," he urged, "when they can get dancing and supper as well, gratis, next door. I daresay the parson is a very jolly fellow, but such goings on come hard on a struggling professional, who has to pay a long rent and rates and taxes into the bargain. The old boy might just as well start in opposition at once."

Mr. Clifford, be it observed, was of the number of those who believe that piety is not incompatible with a merry heart, and the *réunions* that took place in his house were distinguished by an *éclat*

and liberality that fairly won the hearts of his congregation. "Clifford is a sensible man," was the common remark; "his religion is made to wear, there is no puritanical humbug about him." Those who liked tea and cake, strawberries and cream, ices and lemonade, intellectual conversation, and pretty faces, had only to call at No. 2, Arlington Terrace, about half-past six, on a Tuesday evening, and be humoured to the top of their bent. Those who did not care to discuss Gregorian tones or the last new anthem could dance, and those who were too old for flirting could enjoy a quiet game of cards. You had nothing to pay, and the mere fact of your being an habitual attendant at the iron church was a sufficient claim to hospitality. Still, when the plates were sent round the next Sunday, it was considered mean if you dropped in nothing better than a trumpery fourpenny bit or a shabby sixpence.

It is a warm close evening towards the end of August, and Mr. Clifford sits in his dining-room taking tea with a couple of friends, one of them a junior member of his congregation. His teacups are of the daintiest; they are almost transparent, and are ornamented with gilt rims and a leaf-pattern in delicate blue. His slices of bread and butter are fashionably thin, and his conversation, without being stiff, is full of propriety. He is the polished gentleman of the world and the spiritual adviser in equal proportions. He has just been explaining an allusion in a late sermon that has troubled the mind of his young friend, and by his manner of discussing Mendelssohn's "Te Deum" it is easy to see that he has more than a superficial knowledge of music. His coat is of the clerical cut, but admirably made; his hands are white, but rather large and with powerful fingers; a slight scent pervades his person, and suggests the recent employment of Windsor soap. Possibly his smile is a trifle mechanical, his voice, though measured, is full of suavity, and altogether he is an admirable type of the orthodox English clergyman, with just the slightest dash in the world of the polished ecclesiastic of the good old St. Omer school.

His dining-room is a spacious apartment comfortably but not ostentatiously furnished, though the old masters on the wall have frames rather too glaringly yellow, and are not free from a suspicion of Wardour Street. The table and chairs would be better if they were not so new; they are of excellent mahogany, but it is not yet mellowed to the desirable tone of deep rich brown. Somehow or another an air of newness and excessive speck-and-spanness is in certain houses suggestive of a screw loose, at all events when combined with ancient masters whose genuineness is not at all problematical. However, if certain details of Mr. Clifford's establishment are not above reproach, there is one feature



with which it is impossible to be displeased—his domestic. He has no substantial butler to open his door—men servants and good dinners are more in harmony with low church doctrines than high—but the Hebe who answers your ring at the bell is fresh and dapper and kissable enough to disarm the wrath of the fiercest of sheriff's officers.

"I have been very much pleased," observes Mr. Clifford in his most dulcet tone, and looking towards the elder of his two visitors, "by a letter I received this morning from Mrs. Templeton. She enclosed a sovereign towards the expenses of the church, and begged that Mendelssohn's anthem, 'Hear my prayer,' might be performed after the sermon next Sunday evening. I really wish," continued the worthy clergyman, "that some other members of my congregation would be equally generous. People are quite mistaken when they represent me as a man of large private means."

The proprietor of St. Barabbas smiles, and his friends smile too. Neither of them, however, seems inclined to act on the good man's hint.

"By-the-bye, Saunders," he resumes, after a pause, "I read a paragraph in yesterday evening's *Comet*, which spoke of an iron church lately opened at the west end, in which the services were conducted with much splendour, and from which the incumbent, by means of the offertory, derived upwards of a thousand a year. I fear it will be a long time before I meet with equal success at St. Barabbas'. And the best part of the story is that it seems people imagine mine to be the church alluded to in the paragraph."

Again does Mr. Clifford smile, and again is his example followed by his friends. It is possible, however, that the young gentleman, who has had his doubts cleared up, smiles as much out of courtesy as from genuine enjoyment.

"I heard a curious story, too," continues Mr. Clifford, "from Robbins, whom I met in the omnibus coming back from the city. He has lately been very much annoyed by people talking in church, and has remonstrated with them more than once. Well, the other day old Mr. Jackson called at his house and said that he was really astonished any one could have made use of such language as he had been told he had employed towards his daughter. 'The idea,' he said, 'of asking any one in church if a mustard plaster would keep her quiet!' Poor Robbins looked astonished and puzzled, as well he might. He protested he had never said anything of the kind, and that he should never have dreamt of such rudeness. However, old Mr. Jackson declared positively that those were the words repeated to him by his wife, and

at last it turned out that Miss Clara, being rather confused, had misunderstood Robbins and fancied that he had insulted her, when all that he had really said was ‘*Must I again ask you to be quiet ?*’”

Once more the two guests smile as in duty bound, and Mr. Clifford, looking at his watch, remarks that it is time for him to be going to see how the decorations are getting on in the church.

St. Barabbas-in-the-fields has a hollow, hungry look in the twilight. A single gas-lamp near the chancel flickers despondently, and the rest of the building is in comparative gloom. Empty benches gape row upon row. The doors are locked, and the windows have a misty spectral appearance. The silence is broken only by an occasional footfall, a few indistinct words, or the blow of a hammer echoing sullenly up amongst the rafters. The altar is denuded of its trappings, and reveals a plain oaken table, not even varnished. A young gentleman with a good deal of hair brushed jauntily from his brow towards the back of his head stands on a step-ladder nailing a wreath of white roses to the gilt cross. A young woman, possibly his sister, has taken up her position within the chancel, and is arranging some flowers in gilt vases. She greets Mr. Clifford with a sunny smile and a short musical laugh that is quite a relief in that dreary building. Near the organ an elderly lady sits on the ground, her mouth full of pins, industriously hemming a banner.

“Ah! Mrs. Robbins,” says the Rev. proprietor, “you set us an example of hard work that we ought to be proud to follow. Really without your assistance I should have despaired of having things ready in time. I must compliment you on your taste in that design. A gold cross on a white ground. Let me see, it is to go to the extreme left of the chancel, is it not?”

“Lor! Mr. Clifford,” responds the matron, “I am surprised you should forget your own directions. Why, it is to be placed at the side of the pulpit. On the left of the chancel you know we shall have the white triangle on the crimson ground and the star of Bethlehem on blue; on the right, the gold dove on green and the silver cross on dark brown. The processional banner will be ready by to-morrow evening, and I am sure you will be charmed with it when you see it. By-the-bye, those brass rods and rings are really beautiful. They will have a most handsome and rich appearance.”

“Come, now,” said Mr. Clifford, with a smile, “what do you suppose I gave for them?”

“A guinea at the very least,” answered the matron, decisively.

“Eleven and six,” replied the clergyman in a modest tone, as

if he were conscious of having made a good bargain, but did not wish to boast.

"You don't say so," answered the lady on the ground, full of amazement, "why they are dirt cheap at the money—really beautiful—and you know they will always be coming in useful. You won't be sorry you bought them when Christmas and Easter are round again."

"I hope," replied Mr. Clifford, meekly, "to have effected many improvements before then. We are only in a transition state at present. By-the-bye, Hogsbrook remonstrated with me the other day about the cross in the procession, but I flatter myself I have overcome his scruples. 'Thank you, Mr. Clifford,' he said, shaking my hand, 'you have put matters plainly before me; I withdraw my objection.' You would hardly believe it," continued the clergyman, turning to the young friend whom he had relieved of his perplexities, "but when I first opened the church even the candles on the altar gave offence. Well, there are only two now, but before this time next year I hope to have at least forty in their place."

"Ah!" he cried, suddenly, "there is some one knocking at the door. Don't disturb yourself, Mrs. Robbins. I will step round and see who it is. I fancy it must be the man from Mrs. Templeton's with the flowers."

## CHAPTER VIII.

FEAST OF THE DEDICATION.—MORNING. *Responses*, Tallis in D. *Venite*, Battishill in G. *Psalms*, Chard in A major. *Te Deum and Jubilate*, Schubert in F. *Anthem*, "I have surely built Thee a house," Boyce. *Introit*, "Blessed is He," Jones. *Hymn*, 142. *Sanctus*, Attwood in F. *Kyrie, Creed, and Gloria*, Mozart in C minor. AFTERNOON—*Psalms*, Smith in E, Saunders in G. *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis*, Schumann in F. *Anthem*, "Behold now let us rejoice," Cherubini. *Hymns*, 12 and 27. EVENING—*Psalms*, Attwood in E. *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis*, Gounod in C. major. *Anthem*, "I will give thanks," Rossini. *Hymns*, 24, 102, and 37. *Anthem after sermon*, "Hear my prayer," Mendelssohn.

Long before the doors opened, a dense crowd had collected outside. By the time the bells began tolling, the church was full. By five minutes to eleven there was not even standing room, but the doors had to be left open on account of the heat. The vergers had hard work to maintain anything like order. They remonstrated with the crowd, but in vain. A billow of hot, red faces



surged tumultuously, and refused to listen to reason. "The cry was still they come." In spite of the church being as full as it could hold, people tried obstinately to push in through the doors. At last the vergers drew stout red cords down the sides of the aisles and in front of the crowd, which stood three deep under the west window, fearing lest the congregation should grow unmanageable, break in upon the procession, and swamp it.

And now a deep and prolonged "Amen" is heard from the vestry, and the organ, after a brief introduction, commences the processional hymn, giving out the melody on the *tuba mirabilis*. Voices are heard in the distance, and the Reverend Awdry Clifford, followed by some thirty choristers, advances up the church, his surplice overhung with trappings of red and gold, gorgeous as an archbishop of the middle ages. Great is the excitement. More than one unruly individual jumps up on his seat to get a better view, and the *habitués* of St. Barabbas are charmed to hear in more than one direction an indignant whisper to the effect that "really it is nothing more nor less than popery."

So elaborate and profuse are the decorations of the church, that pen is baffled in attempting to describe them. Round each lamp clings a sheaf of corn crowned with poppies. The font is ornamented with cut flowers of the most brilliant hues, arranged in patterns. The chancel is a mass of evergreens—a perfect little copse. Mr. Clifford and his choristers pass to their seats under a triumphal arch of boughs, which is secured by a wire to the ceiling to prevent possible and ignominious accidents. The altar is covered with a crimson velvet and gold cloth, and is surrounded by fuschias, geraniums, and other horticultural triumphs, in pots concealed by borders of mignonette and a coating of moss. Solemn pansies, dahlias, and carnations bloom in eight gilt vases, four on each side of the cross, which is chastely decorated with a wreath of white roses. The woodwork at the back of the chancel is hung with drapery arranged in alternate folds of white and red, and edged with a border of convolvulus, hops, and clematis in combination.

The music produced an immense effect. The sermon was agreeably brief and jubilant in tone, the crowd at the doors sneered and scoffed at each separate detail, and yet strangely enough remained till all was over. The congregation went home to its dinner thoroughly delighted, and with plenty to talk about, and Mr. Clifford felt that thus far—no doubt partly owing to the industry of Mrs. Robbins—the festival had been distinguished by marked success.

The afternoon service was but a *succès d'estime*. It was thinly attended, and both the choristers and Mr. Clifford were

tired. Even a baptism, accompanied by a processional hymn and an anthem, in which ten voices at one end of the church answered ten voices at the other, failed to impart interest to the proceedings. In brief, the afternoon service, though elaborate, was a mistake, and Mr. Clifford felt as much before it was half-way through, and made the heat of the day a pretext for abridging his sermon.

But when the evening came—ah! there was excitement indeed. Directly the doors opened, terrific was the scramble for seats, and I am sorry to say that more than one very nice young lady was elbowed aside with the scantiest courtesy.

We don't go to church to have our lace mantles torn in two, and our skirts covered with dust and dragged out at the folds.

A tall military-looking man had the best of it, and a stout old party, not distantly related to Mrs. Brown, declared audibly that "this beat going to see Garibaldi and the Crystal Palace fireworks put together."

What with the music, and the dresses, and the lights, and the splendour of the *tout ensemble*, every beholder was in the highest good humour, and many a reprobate who had come to scoff, made up his mind to pay a second visit to St. Barabbas next Sunday, being obliged to confess that the proceedings were far more lively and exhilarating than any to which he had been accustomed at more orthodox establishments.

Mr. Clifford, however, seemed wearied and careworn. Perhaps the combined exertion and heat of the day had been too much for him. But whatever the cause, it was noticeable that he was in far from good spirits, and he drew his handkerchief across his brow with the air of a martyr. He chose as his text the story of the poor widow who dropped her mite into the treasury.

For a time he seemed at a loss both for words and ideas. His listeners looked disappointed, and glanced from one to the other in surprise. At length, however, he began to warm with his subject, and just as his congregation was beginning to resign itself to a dull quarter of an hour, he managed by an unexpected digression to fix the attention of every one in the church.

"My brethren," he began, "it is a year to-day since we held in this building the first of a series of services that have been attended most numerous for upwards of a twelvemonth. It has been gratifying to me to observe the crowds that have flocked hither Sunday after Sunday, and it is a testimony to the success of our undertaking, and to the existence of a want that has at length been supplied, that from the beginning there has been no falling off in the demand for seats; on the contrary, many more now take part in our services than we can conveniently accommodate. At the same time there is one subject on which I must beg to address a

few words to you. I speak only to a portion of my congregation, and I trust that what duty compels me to say to them will be received in no spirit of vindictive hostility. If I am called upon to reprove, at least it is far from my wish to offend.

“There are a large number of people who come here Sunday after Sunday and contribute little or nothing towards the expenses of the church. I must remind them that we depend for our support upon the offertory. It seems to be taken for granted that I am a rich man. Once for all let me declare most emphatically I am nothing of the kind. Were I so I would gladly support the church and the services held here out of my own pocket; as it is, I must beg that those who avail themselves of my ministration will recognize more fully that they have duties to perform as well as privileges to enjoy. It has been our aim to carry out the functions of the church with a degree of ceremony and completeness not usual in the present day. Now, I need scarcely remind you that a large and efficient choir, elaborate decorations, and the relief of the poor and needy in a district so impoverished as our own, entail a considerable weekly expenditure. There are some whom I have to thank most sincerely for hearty and continued support. There are others who come here habitually, occupy the best seats, show by their presence that they sympathize with our efforts, and yet contribute little or nothing to the general expenses. Now, my brethren, I have borne with this for a long while, but I am determined to put up with it no longer. I take my share of the burden, I am entitled to expect that you will not flinch from yours. I tell you plainly, either the aid extended to me must be very considerably increased, or I must shut up the church and bring these services to a conclusion. I should be sorry to be compelled to do so, but I cannot continue things on their present footing any longer. I say to those who come here and listen, and take part in the services, and walk as a matter of course to the best seats, and think they have done their duty if they drop twopence or threepence into the plate, either contribute of your abundance, take lower places in the sanctuary, or keep away altogether. We can do very well without you. There are many here who cannot get seats at all; make room for them, and if you won't give anything yourselves, at all events don't deprive us of the chance of receiving something from those who at present cannot get beyond the doors. I am really ashamed to see the well-dressed men and women who hurry out of church just before the offertory, or slide a fourpenny or threepenny bit, or even coppers into the plate. To such persons as these I have only one thing to say. Drop in your shilling in a lump at the beginning of the year and have done with it. Don't shuffle in a halfpenny now



and a halfpenny then, and spread your coppers over a twelve-month. In conclusion, I need not do more than allude to those who are not ashamed to drop medals or even buttons into the plates. I beg you to remember, my brethren, that I don't stand up in this pulpit week after week for my own amusement. I work hard for your benefit, and expect to be properly supported. I receive you at my house, I visit you in your sickness, my time is taken up in consoling and advising you, and as I do the work which properly devolves upon the district clergy, I have a right to expect that you will aid me to the best of your ability. If you are determined not to do so, well and good, but let me tell you, you are no longer wanted; this is not the only church in the district; go elsewhere. Some of you seem to think you do me a favour by coming here at all. Allow me to say you are greatly mistaken. I am in need of no man's countenance. I am conscious of sincerity of purpose, I do what those who ridicule and denounce me leave undone, and I have no wish to be patronized by anybody. If you were to go to a place of amusement and to decline to pay you would very properly be turned out of the building. If you come here and avail yourself of the benefits to be obtained by doing so, recollect that these services are held for your advantage, and don't be so mean as to withhold your support. If any one here *can't* pay, let him remember I am not speaking to *him*. I complain of those who *can* pay and won't; who come here decked out in silks and satins and fine new clothes, and let the plate pass by them, pretending that they are engaged in prayer, or that their eyes are fixed on one of the texts over the windows. The really poor I am always glad to see about me, and I don't expect them to contribute a penny towards the charges of the church. But I am resolved that I will no longer tolerate the meanness of people who have money and to spare, and yet gracelessly thrust the burden of support upon their less affluent brethren. I trust that I shall never be obliged to speak again as I have done this evening. What I have said has been pleasant neither to you nor me, be assured of that, but it was incumbent upon me that sooner or later I should put matters plainly before you, and on consideration it appeared to me that there could be no more fitting opportunity for doing so than the present. My brethren, I pass gladly from a painful subject. I have been driven to it by sheer necessity; nothing less than sheer necessity shall compel me to revert to it in the future."

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"Gross impudence!" said one.

Well I never!" protested Miss Lucy.

"Deuced cheeky!" laughed a counter-jumper, who fancied himself in the Guards.

And more than one pursy tradesman muttered indignantly, "The fellow's a rascal. I can quite believe all they say of him. If ever I am caught inside his confounded church again, may I be hanged!"

In the meanwhile, the gentlemen of the choir, and the little boys, and the cross-bearers, all of whom had been on the broad grin for the last half-hour, had a hearty laugh to themselves in the vestry. And the Rev. Awdry Clifford looked knowing, and prophesied that in spite of numerous desertions, the church would be fuller next Sunday than ever.

And so it was. Better still, the proceeds of the offertory were far more satisfactory than they had proved on any former occasion.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CISSY'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY RESUMED.

WHEN I awoke the next day it was with a strange sensation of having entered upon a new state of being altogether.

I tried to be proud, but there was a terrible sinking at my heart. All my courage and confidence of the preceding morning—which seemed months away—had deserted me. I felt that now I had only myself to depend upon, that I was quite alone, at the mercy of strangers, and a mere shrimp. Acknowledging the fact, I felt utterly miserable, and, like the thorough little coward that I was, I could hardly restrain my tears, and wished myself safe back at home.

To this day I have a horror of waking up in a strange place. If I had my will I would never travel at all. I am by no means curious or adventurous. When I move from home I leave my heart behind me. I think I am tolerably constant in my loves. It may be a weakness, but by degrees I allow even inanimate objects to smuggle themselves into my affections. I am worse than any old lady. I cannot stop short at a cat or a dog. If a spot be dear to me I extend my weak, shallow love to everything around me. Each small object has its mute pleading voice, and seems to beg for my sympathy. Chairs and tables even, assume, after a time, the guise of humble friends. It was said of old that sermons lay hid in stones. Surrounded by my dumb companions, so eloquently suggestive, I wander far, far away into a vague dreamland of sunshine and shadow. I suppose I ought to call myself gushing, and yet I am not sure that the word would be a fair one. Perhaps I am

hysterical or morbidly nervous ; but, be the cause what it may,—and at heart I speak without affectation—these kindly gossips of wood and stone, these genial nonentities who cannot feel, much less think, are to me inexpressibly eloquent. They remind me of happy hours and pleasant day-dreams over which I love to linger, though they have fallen very, very far short of fulfilment ; they speak of dear friends who have been with me, but whom I shall never see again ; and when I leave the room and the street I have been accustomed to, so long, it is with a pang of true regret I gaze mournfully around on familiar objects and remember that these motionless, patient, and almost solemn watchers of weal and woe stood by me, stubbornly, unreprouchfully faithful, when better creatures, whom I had reason to trust, dropped away and left me in my strait. Then my heart whispers to me—no doubt out of its weakness—that were I to quit these kind familiar friends without sorrow, I should have something wherewith to reproach myself,—that I should be ungrateful.

I have had to battle with this morbid feeling again and again. Quietly persistent it reasserts itself to this day. I thrust it down and laugh at my own folly ; but even as I drive it back it turns with Parthian cunning and pierces me. Whatever I may appear from my past words, I am not one of those tiresome egotists who imagine themselves more than ordinarily sensitive or tender-hearted ; but I may say, truly, that I am pained at being obliged to quench a sympathetic feeling of any kind. Even necessary roughness troubles me. I wish one might love without stint, and not have to be ashamed of doing so. But in the nineteenth century, and in this civilized country, if you would succeed, and not be thought a fool, you must harden your heart as a matter of principle.

When we lead a solitary life, mixing in the world but not of it, imagination expands, faith deepens, and springs of consolation open in the very rocks. In our loneliness we crave for sympathy ; we must love if we cannot be loved. If man will not hear us then we cry for help to nature. The kind mother reveals to us sources of comfort that are hidden from the wise and prudent, that in the work-a-day world seem shallow enough, that at the first blush of true *human* love vanish like dreams at dawn. But even dreams can console for the time being. Is mere derision a fit reward for the simple means that keep our affections pure and warm ? No, God is Love and Love divine ; the merest trumpery that saves our sympathies from stagnating is holy.

In the dead silence of night and in the drowsy twilight mist I sit and dream, and well-known objects seem to acquire faces and expressions, and divining the course of my thoughts to comfort or gently reproach me. Sometimes their mute eloquence



moves me deeply and turns me from anger to sorrow, from rage to contrition. I am childishly weak, no doubt, for there are periods when the very air seems full of voices, when I can almost fancy that dumb soulless wood and stone can find a tongue and speak.

When I quench the fire that has warmed and ministered to me so long, when I say farewell to the shadows that have flickered on the selfsame spot and have travelled the selfsame narrow course day after day for months together, when I bid adieu to the flowers that have born leaf and blossom for me alone, when I dismantle and make cold the room that has been a snuggerly and safe refuge, that has remained faithfully pleasant to me through good report and ill report, and that for such a length of time that it has included the beginning and ending, the making and losing of friendships, I cannot help feeling a trace of sorrow, a kind of compunction, a sort of self-reproach, as though I had got as much as I could out of the generous and true, and were tossing them aside now that I wanted them no longer.

There are streets, to me so suggestive, so full of memories, so fruitful in emotion of one kind and another, that they seem more than merely so much pavement and road, brick and mortar, window and door and wall. I can almost fancy that they have a soul and are as glad to see me as I am once again to see them.

All this is mere hysterical sentiment, some will be saying. But in facts I am without proper strength of mind. With me instinct outweighs reason. When I was a child I loved my broken toys the best. Now, when I am older, anything that is weak and powerless has a claim upon my affections. Perhaps I am a disappointed woman. Sometimes it is a relief to me to turn from facts to fancies, from the highly intelligent to the utterly contemptible, from man in the image of his maker to soulless friends, who, however much they may want the wisdom of this world, at least, are incapable of doing me an ill turn. This vague sympathy with the inanimate lies deep down in my heart and has slumbered there all my life. I cannot conquer, I can only repress it. It had a strong hold upon me when I was a child. Then, as now, it was a source of comfort to me, a source too of acute suffering at the same time.

To return to the memorable morning on which this chapter opens.

I awoke with a vague sense of uneasiness. I rubbed my eyes, but I was afraid to open them. Something whispered that an unpleasant surprise was in store for me. At last I summoned up resolution to face the reality. I peeped anxiously up from under the bed-clothes and found my fears confirmed. I was without

doubt in a strange place. At first I was puzzled. But I thought for a moment, and then like a cold wind there swept over me the recollection that I was a school-girl. I dropped back on my pillow. My heart sunk at the same time. Oh, little coward!

It was broad daylight, but the house was very quiet. A few pale sunbeams stole in through the window, and the birds were twittering softly, under their breath as it seemed to me, in the trees across the road. Gradually there crept upon my ear the ticking of a clock. I could fancy that the sound was far, far away, and that it was coming nearer and nearer. Other sound there was none. The air was so clear and fresh that it seemed to me almost inhospitable. I missed the heavier atmosphere of dear old London, which was still to me a home, and the accustomed rumble of carts, and the mysterious cries out-of-doors. I felt lonely and dispirited. My fine resolutions crumbled away like dust, and my heart fled back home and clung as it were to the very doorposts, sending up a great cry for pity. "I am such a little thing," it seemed to plead; "I have no strength, and oh home I do love you so! Take me back and forget that I have been boastful. I can't bear to be kept away for months from all that is dear to me." A silly child cry this, but somehow, though I am older and wiser and coarser now, I cannot help wishing that I had the capacity for pure and unquestioning love that I had then.

The four girls who slept in the same room with me lay very quiet. I wondered whether they were asleep or only dozing, or as wide a-wake and as full of thoughts as I was myself. I looked round at the clean, white beds with their simple dimmity hangings, at the heavy old-fashioned door,—half open and disclosing a view of the landing and the thick twisted railings, by which it was separated from the staircase—at the dark oak floor slanting gently down towards my bed and towards the window, near which I lay, at the washing-stand with its four white basins and accompanying mugs, at a certain sturdy-legged little table in the centre of the room, on which by-the-bye stood a fifth basin and mug which I guessed rightly were intended for myself, at the plain wooden framed looking-glass hung above the big washing-stand, immediately over a ledge on which brushes and combs were laid out in neat array, at the little japanned dressing-cases, each surmounted with a sponge and resting on a shelf placed against the wall near the door; lastly my eyes, after glancing for a moment at the ugly striped green paper on the walls and at the slippers and boots and shoes placed in a line near my own little table, rested on four tangled heads of hair which lay almost, though not quite, hidden and nearly motionless, each under its respective counterpane.

It now struck me that quiet as the house was, somebody must be moving, and indeed must have been in the room without my knowing it. The blind was drawn up, and my every-day frock and a clean pair of stockings lay on a chair at the side of my bed. At the sight of them I felt comforted, though I hardly knew why. The sense of utter desolation that had oppressed me began slowly to draw off and to disperse. My heart gradually expanded; I felt as perhaps the flowers feel when after a stormy windy night they are touched by the first gentle rays of the sun. "I am not quite forgotten then," I whispered to myself; "there is some one near who cares a little for me now, and who may care more for me by-and-bye. I am in a strange place, and amongst strange people, but I am not quite alone."

Partly consoled, I was now able to turn my attention to other matters. I was curious to see how the landscape that had looked so stormy and threatening by night would appear in the gladness of morning, and leant forward stealthily to satisfy my curiosity.

I made as little noise as I could, for I was afraid of disturbing my companions. I caught a glimpse of waving fir plumes, of leaves, lighter in hue, trembling and sparkling in the sunlight, of a wide road coloured a rich moist brown by the recent rains, and bordered on each side by an edging of tangled grass, a narrow footpath, and grey moss-clad palings, of some fields near and remote, of a church tower at the foot of a well-wooded hill a mile or two distant, and of a broad band of gleaming blue that lay within a few yards of the house, and which I recognized half doubtingly as the river that in the chill gloomy evening of yesterday had flowed in my imagination a very Lethe. My hurried inspection over, I darted hastily and noiselessly back to my original position.

As I did so a bell began to clang furiously. It came nearer and nearer. I buried my head under the blankets, and thrust my fingers in my ears to keep out the horrid deafening din. When the tumult ceased I emerged into the light of day. I found that my schoolfellows were kicking off their bedclothes, viciously or sullenly as the case might be, and that they were rubbing their eyes and lamenting in tones between a growl and a whine, the necessity of early rising.

Here I pause for a moment from very shame.

What a dull common-place story mine is! May I hope the reader will bear with me. Yet what excuse can I offer? My tale is nothing more nor less than a bald repetition of that simple narrative of school-life which has been told again and again. But to understand my after-career you must first know my childhood. However different I may be now to what I was once, the germ of



the change lay in the associations and incidents, apparently trivial, but sometimes really important, of years gone by.

How well I remember that first day at school, that first day of the purgatory that in my dreams I had mistaken for Heaven.

I shall not, however, detain the reader with my own grievances, real or imaginary, deserved, as some have told me, or otherwise, as I still think myself, longer than I can help. I do not want to make myself out a martyr; I only wish to show that my life, like most other lives, has been consistent, not the one half irreconcilable with the other, but seed, promise, and fruit, the seed nourished unconsciously or without misgiving, developing into a promise of whose true purport and fulfilment I had often either the dimmest or most mistaken conception.

Directly the horrid clatter of the bell ceased, I jumped out of bed. I was not long dressing. At home I had fallen into a certain set way of doing things, and I could be quick without sacrificing neatness or cleanliness.

My toilet finished, I sat down at the foot of my cot and became absorbed in the landscape outside my window. Presently I turned my head and found that only two girls were left in the room. One of them said, curtly, "You had better follow me," and I rose and obeyed her without a word.

We turned down a passage, crossed a couple of bedrooms, opening one into the other, descended a steep and twisted flight of wooden stairs, and found ourselves in the kitchen. From thence we emerged into the playground, immediately opposite the schoolroom, which instinct told me was our destination.

As we entered, twelve girls were standing quietly, each in front of her respective seat, waiting as I guessed for the mistress.

Instead of Mrs. Thorold, to my surprise, it was the Goddess who appeared. She looked very fresh and crisp, and not hurried or discomposed in the least. The room in which we stood was the reverse of a cheerful apartment, and when she came into it full of beauty and brightness and without a fleck or a flaw anywhere about her, she had much the effect of a sunbeam.

Of a wintry sunbeam, I add upon reflection.

In the clear glad morning she looked even more lovely than she had appeared overnight. I had never seen such beauty as hers, and yet there was something repellent even in its very magnificence. Miss Aurora had my adoration without stint, but even as I gazed at her awe-struck, I knew that I could never love her, and I longed to be able to love some one, all my affection at present being vainly bound down at home. Miss Aurora had neither in her air nor in the expression of her face anything at all sympathetic. It was out of the question that I could ever win her

confidence or be able to appeal to her for comfort. I could not for a moment suppose that she was capable of taking a wee, tired out, fretful little child in her arms to rock or sing it to sleep. I could not really believe that she had ever been a girl herself, or at least that she had been subject to a girl's wilfulness or unreason. No, she was not at all the sort of teacher I had expected, and everything was so different from what I had looked for, that I again began to feel sorrowful. The governesses I had read about in books were quiet unassertive women, patient and loving and sympathizing, fond of children, anxious to win the affections of their pupils, and ever ready with an encouraging smile or a pleasant greeting. Sometimes they were young and pretty, but they were always gentle of voice and manner, and though occasionally little more than girls themselves, they had always a dash of motherliness in their composition.

Very different to this was Aurora Thorold. She swept into the mean fusty-smelling room, radiant and impenetrable as a queen, seeming to care nothing either for the love or the hate of any of us. She neither smiled nor greeted us in any wise. Some of the girls murmured, half boldly, half diffidently, "Good morning, ma'am," anxious as it seemed, to conciliate her, and yet by no means sure how their greeting would be taken. Miss Aurora simply repeated the phrase in a low measured tone, and passed to her seat. She opened the desk in front of her with a little gleaming key that turned in the lock with a click, took out some papers, and for a few minutes seemed to forget that we existed at all. Presently she laid the papers in order, one above the other, tied them up in a neat business-like way, put them back from whence she had taken them, rose, and in the calm, passionless, authoritative manner peculiar to her, motioned to us to kneel.

She read prayers icily, and we slipped into our seats as quietly as we could. Soon a gentle hum arose and I began to feel uncomfortable, for there I sat at the end of a table doing absolutely nothing at all, without even a book before me, and the goddess scanning me with a cold critical glance, as though I were some strange little monster from a foreign land. I tried to take my eyes from her, but in vain. She fascinated me. An ordinary child might have turned red, but even in those days I could not blush. I was white as a sheet, and to all appearance bloodless as a boiled rabbit. Doctors probably would have called me *anaemic*; for my own part I only knew that I was not strong, that I could not walk far without feeling tired, that I was timid and easily frightened, very susceptible to cold, subject to bad dreams, fearful of surprises and loud noises, mopy and fond of sitting in a quiet corner by myself, building castles in the air.

The goddess beckoned to me, and I went and stood near her. She asked me certain questions in a subdued but distinct tone, and I answered them with such little confidence as I could muster. She never took her eye from mine, never relaxed a muscle of her face, showed no sign of being offended at my ignorance or clumsy way of speaking; in fact, betrayed not the slightest token of human weakness of any kind.

She set me some small task, and dismissed me to my seat. When next I ventured to look towards her she was sitting calmly thinking, and I wondered whether she was thinking of me, or whether I was forgotten altogether.

I look back through a mist of years, pushing aside a host of influences and associations, and that first morning at school comes back as distinctly as though it had never really passed, but were destined to begin over and over again, and from time to time to work its small way through, minute by minute, from the time that I awoke to the close of the first day on which I knew what it was to be utterly lonely and thoroughly disheartened. I remember how quickly I learnt my lesson, repeating it twice or thrice to myself to make sure. I remember how confidently I resolved that I would be a good girl for evermore, and would settle all my lessons in the future, however difficult they might be, in the same decisive way that I had conquered this my first one. I remember how my thoughts, once liberated, winged their way back home, and how when the clock struck eight I said to myself, "This time yesterday I was in my own little room. I was shutting up my *Arabian Nights*, which I was too much excited to read patiently, and was just going down to breakfast." Then something akin to regret began to gnaw my small heart, but I stifled the emotion resolutely, as much perhaps out of a cowardly wish to avoid pain, as from any more heroic motive, and I wished so that the goddess would call me up to repeat my lesson, and so force the thoughts that I could not quite control into a new track altogether.

Presently my wish was gratified. No sooner had I risen than one of the girls looked towards me, nudged her companion, and made a face which I knew was meant to disconcert me, but it was so unintentionally funny that I could hardly help laughing.

I succeeded very well, and was sent to my seat with another and longer lesson. But I was not discouraged at all. I only felt a little proud and more confident of my abilities than I had been hitherto. I boldly resolved to put forth my powers, and to prove that my strength had not been overrated.

At eight o'clock the bell rang for breakfast. I was very hungry, and, having conquered my second great difficulty, felt quite



elate. But the meal was a mournful one. The goddess motioned with her finger, and we rose up and stood in a double line at the bottom of the room. Then one of the girls respectfully opened the door, out swept Miss Aurora, and we followed her, I by myself, forming that odd and unlucky number thirteen, and bringing up the rear.

The dining-hall, as it was termed, stood a few yards from the school. It was a square apartment on a level with the play-ground, without a fireplace, without a carpet or matting on the floor, without paper on the walls, and without a cloth on either of the two long tables that stretched from one end of the room to the other. We drank milk and water out of blue mugs, and eat stale bread meagrely buttered with what appetite we could command. I was dreadfully taken aback, but still hungry, so I managed to make a tolerable meal. The goddess sat at the head of our table, read a book, making notes with a pencil on the back of an envelope, and effectually checked anything in the way of conversation. Ten minutes was the allotted space of time, and directly Miss Aurora's precise watch told the unwelcome tale, we were dismissed into the play-ground with scantest courtesy.

At ten school recommenced. My work was not beyond my powers. Indeed, I soon mastered it, and then found that I had a good many minutes to dispose of, so I spent them in travelling back into a past that, after the way of the world, I was beginning to regret, merely, I suppose, because it was irrecoverable. I had been eager enough to get away from home, and I felt that a punishment was coming upon me for my foolish hankering after change, and concluded, rather too hastily, perhaps, that so far as love was concerned I had been cast upon a barren shore. Neither the goddess nor any of her pupils seemed to view me with much favour. I had made sundry attempts to please, and I had been repulsed on each occasion. I was anxious to make friends, and I had been told roughly to hold my tongue or to keep my distance, and I was beginning to find out that the life of pretty story books and the life of the real world are not exactly one and the same, and that a timid, bashful child who has never known other children is not likely to become a general favourite with a dozen girls of whom the youngest is her senior by two or three years.

Thus I was disposed to be dismal, and my heart misgave me, the more because, like all over-sanguine persons, I am easily discouraged. As a woman I lack moral tone; a rebuff at the outset daunts me; I cannot be defiant; I am morbidly apprehensive of the future. What I am now I was in a far greater degree when a child. I had no sustaining belief in self, no inward conviction that I should gain my own way at last. I was impatient and fret-

ful, and when once I had been disappointed I was apt to rush to dangerous conclusions.

A fatal habit. Let circumstances be as obstinate as they please keep to the road you have adopted. However determined your opponent may seem, be you, too, defiant and you will have a fair chance of succeeding in the long run. Hope to wear out his courage and patience. Opposition as often as not counts on non-resistance. Win your enemies' respect and friendship, and at least neutrality will follow in course of time.

But a truce to stale moralizing.

Eleven o'clock struck. Thought I to myself, "By this time mamma has gone up to her room. She will remain there till a quarter to twelve, and then will come down to see how I have done my copy. Papa is at his office; I wonder whether he is thinking of me. I should like to be able to creep up behind him softly and to throw my arms round his neck and kiss him. But of course that could not be done in a crowded office. What a silly little creature I am! Still, I can fancy him sitting in a great arm-chair writing, his head bent down over his desk, and his hat and coat hanging from a peg at his side. Every now and then he looks up and draws his hand across his mouth as if thinking. Were I in the room he would glance towards me and smile, or call me by some pet name, and then I should laugh and ask if I might sit down close to his desk, and I should creep quietly up into a chair much too large for me, and lie hid behind the arms, reading and turning the leaves over very softly for fear of disturbing him. Oh, I should be happy indeed. But dear me, what a little stupid I am! As I said to myself before, how could I do all this at the office? Well, I am back home again—home again! Oh, how I should like to be able to fly away and have one peep at the dear old house, and then to fly swiftly back again to be ready with my lesson when called for. I can fancy Mary tapping at the door and saying, "I am quite ready now, Miss, if you like to go for a walk;" and I can imagine myself jumping up and answering, "I shall be ready in a minute or two; just let me put these things away."

A sudden cloud gathers over the scene, but it clears away presently and I find that I am dressed and that we have started.

We are walking down the street. It is a bright sunshiny day, with a blue sky overhead and a cool pleasant air blowing. The rain overnight has made the roads muddy, but the dust that for the last week has tormented us dreadfully has disappeared, and everything glistens and looks fresh like flowers after they have been watered. Numbers of people have come out to enjoy the fine weather, some on horseback, some in carriages, some on foot,

including many ladies and children who wish to take a turn in the Gardens before luncheon. The streets are fuller than usual, and everyone, from the tradesman's boy upwards, who, basket at back, struts along whistling or singing, seems to have gained a fresh stock of spirits.

We pass the old crossing sweeper at the corner of the terrace. He is a very grave man, with a white beard and a turban on his head. He wears a great coat, thick gloves, and a comforter round his neck. Sometimes I have given him money, but he takes no notice of us as we pass. I wonder whether he is really poor, or only an eccentric miser who has gold stowed away up a chimney. It is a problem that baffles me. He has much the same expression of face as some of the gentlemen whom I have seen going into the big houses, or seated in pews of their own at church. When I present anything to him he takes it as a matter of course, and yet surely it can hardly be pleasant standing in cold weather at the corner of a street, broom in hand, waiting for coppers. Once I heard a tall, well-dressed man say as he passed him, "Ah, Bob, good morning!" and then the sweeper laughed, and muttered something in reply, not even putting his hand to his cap, and that seemed to me dreadfully familiar.

As we cross over into the Gardens we meet a good many children, some of them out with handsomely dressed ladies, their mothers; others with servants, or dowdy, meek-spirited women, whom I take to be governesses. Just in front of the gate there is a man throwing mud into a cart. I fancy he must be a good-humoured fellow, in spite of his huge size, bare arms, and red, dirt-bespattered face, for he asks a servant girl in front of us if she would like any soup, and points to his shovel which he has just filled. The nursemaid calls him an impudent fellow and giggles, and a fat, angry-faced woman at her side carrying a baby says, "Like his impertinence, indeed. Don't speak to him, Sarah—a low, nasty fellow." The man draws his grimy hand across his face, looks at his companion who stands near the horse's head, winks, and after that laughs gruffly. But I am sorry that he has been insulted. He is a poor man, and only meant to be funny. I should like to give him a penny, only I am afraid he would be hurt at my doing so, and I am sure Mary would not tolerate such conduct for a moment.

When we come to the Serpentine there is a great quacking of ducks. The birds are waddling up from the water-side to be fed. Some of them are long-legged, supercilious creatures, with their wings gathered up peevishly over their backs; others have curious bills, and a bloodshot, dissipated look about the eyes. Others again are white, round, perky little things, rolling along in com-



pany with old stagers, who stretch their wings out with an air of grotesque importance, and new arrivals from strange countries, stiff in outline and brilliant of plumage, that appear as if they were made up of bits of coloured china. Children are throwing crumbs about with a prodigious jerk of the arm, and are breaking up pieces of bread and talking to their pets in a half coaxing, half absent way at the same time. None of the greedy creatures, however, pay any attention to these remonstrances, or even to an uplifted finger or a face full of solemn warning. Their eyes are fixed on the bread, and they move about impatiently on those curious webbed feet of theirs which look so singularly useless and out of place on the muddy bank. They gabble tumultuously for notice, and seem to insist that they are on the point of starvation and really cannot wait any longer.

Nurses and children are going down the steps of the spring, and I want Mary to let me buy a bun of the old woman who keeps the glasses and biscuits that I may feed the ducks. Mary says, "Go, my dear, if you wish to," and then I turn my penny backwards and forwards in my hand and feel nervous and put my fingers in hers and wish she would go with me and tell the rather deaf old creature in her clear, blunt, decisive way what I want.

Just as I am framing my petition, for Mary is slow at taking a hint, and I have not courage enough to own in plain language that I am afraid, a girls' school came into the garden through the gate in the Bayswater Road, and I think to myself, "Some day or another——"

Ah! poor cloud palace how suddenly you tumble to the ground. The fancied reality is the dream, and the dream the reality. That "some day" is to-day and the day after and to-morrow for months to come. What I have wondered about again and again is even now in process of fulfilment. The dear old home life that I despised while I enjoyed it, because like all truly happy times it was uneventful, is gone away to revive again only at the end of such an enormous stretch of days and weeks and months that I hardly dare look forward.

Ah! you dear home, my heart aches when I think of you. It is the close of summer now, and it will be winter before I see you again. The trees are still green and the days are still warm, but before the happy time comes the branches will be bare, the fallen withered leaves will have been trampled under foot, the bleak winds will be howling, and the cold dark mornings and the long evenings will have set in.

From now till Christmas! Fifteen weeks and some odd days.  
[ Oh! what a long, long time. To-day is the last of August,

but all September and all October and all November and more than half of dreary December must pass before I see you again. Oh! dear, dear home! Oh! dear people who live there, and with whom I have fought, and quarrelled, and sulked, and to whom I have cried in the extremity of my passion, "I shall be glad when the 30th of August comes, and I have to go away from you for good."

Oh! those hasty words, what a bitter repentance have they entailed already. Oh! what a wicked ungrateful girl I must have been. I deserve to feel miserable. I deserve to long vainly for what I may, perhaps, never enjoy again.

You laugh, dear reader. For you in your mature wisdom time rushes by all too quick; but to a delicate, helpless little woman of seven or eight years old, parted from a home that she loves as part of herself, fifteen or sixteen weeks is a very lifetime.

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Dinner at the Clock-house was a dreary ceremony.

I was in want of food, but I had no appetite. A few minutes before one I saw plates and dishes and meats being carried from the kitchen across the playground, and I thought within myself, "what a terribly business-like, comfortless way they have of doing things here." Why I should have thought this I can hardly say, for at home I had not lived in luxury. But strange ways and strange places, merely from their being strange, have a certain element of discomfort to those who love the old ones, and I must admit that even now in my days of worldly wisdom and professed philosophy I should have my doubts of a dinner that had been carried through the open air and, for the sake of punctuality, left on the table a minute or two to cool. Besides I had a remembrance of breakfast, and I could not think of dinner in an uncarpeted, unpapered, unwarmed, and almost unfurnished room as an inspiring meal.

Mrs. Thorold, to do her justice, stinted us in nothing but time. The goddess said grace, and stood at a table in the middle of the apartment and helped us liberally. We had the choice of two or three plainly cooked dishes, as much bread as we chose to ask for, and an abundance of fresh but lukewarm vegetables. A place was laid at the head of the table for the schoolmistress, but she did not appear. Twenty minutes was the time allowed us for refreshment, and at the end of that all too brief period, Miss Aurora, in a highly matter-of-fact, but decidedly abrupt, way, said grace. This was astounding, as some of us had barely reached the middle of our second helpings. As for myself, I had only just summoned up courage to ask for some potatoes, and sore was my dismay at this premature thanksgiving. But the goddess said,

severely, "Do not go away, Darlington, remain till you have finished," and I struggled on through my rations while the scullery maid and the old butler cleared the things away; the latter asking me in a gruff tone, "Why I didn't eat like the other young ladies?"

During this my first school dinner I made myself wofully ridiculous. When it came to my turn to be helped, I hesitated, being shy, and never having hitherto been asked what I would take, at least in the presence of company. Miss Aurora, seeing my embarrassment, said drily, "What shall I send you, Darlington?" and this laboured politeness only embarrassed me the more. So I shifted uncomfortably in my seat, nervously brushed my hair back from my forehead with one hand, and at last blurted out, "Well, I don't know, I think I will take a little bit of pork pie!"

The girls giggled, but the goddess looked serenely unconscious. After dinner one of my new acquaintances came up to me, thrust her face against mine, and muttered between her set teeth, "You little beast, how dare you take any of that pork pie without first asking my leave?" For it appeared that the dainty on which I had trespassed was not exactly common property, but part of a hamper of good things that this amiable young lady had brought with her from home.

"Brute," said another girl.

"Piggy-wig," cried a third, in allusion to my supposed greediness; and the nickname stuck to me.

For weeks afterwards I was teased without mercy on the subject of my unfortunate answer.

Various were the tones in which it was repeated. Sometimes the words were jerked out, sometimes drawled, sometimes they were shouted, sometimes whispered, but they never failed to produce the desired result—scornful laughter and fingers pointed in derision.

On the afternoon of that memorable first day we went for a walk. We did not march two and two, as I had expected, but straggled in companies of three or four. As for myself, I was left alone, but I crept nearer and nearer to the goddess till at last I was by her side, and there I remained, trudging silently along, till our exercise was over.

It was a warm sunny afternoon, but to me there seemed a strange chill in the air. The country disappointed me, it was not what I had expected at all. It was without variety, without animation. After London with its busy streets and clamour of sounds, the wide-spreading silent fields, the muddy roads, and the tall hedges on which we could hear the leaves rustling as we passed, had in them something lonely and dispiriting. A sort of



blight seemed to be settling down upon everything. It may have been prejudice, but I fancied that the very grass had a coarse stunted look, and that the hedgerows bristled sharply. We wound up no pleasant hills, we dived down into no snug valleys, we crept through no winding lanes overhung with leaves and girt in with clustering wild flowers, we deviated neither to the right nor to the left, we did not even cross a field, we met nothing interesting, nothing tender or soothing, nothing stimulating to the curiosity; we were greeted by no varieties or contrasts of colour; no glimpses of distant scenery bathed in sunshine and shadow, no rich parklands, no clear laughter-loving streams, no velvety slopes of hillside, no quaint old-fashioned houses bosomed in elm and beech, with the spreading yew on the trim-kept lawn, and bright flowers on the terraces, refreshed our sight as we held on our melancholy way.

How I longed for a change of some sort, for a few yards of waste ground with its mingled furze and broom, for a village green such as I had read about in books, for a picturesque bank tunnelled with birds' nests, for a silent dreamy copse, for a foot or two of heather and sand, for a clump of disconsolate pines with the wind whistling through them, for a windmill set like a beacon on some neighbouring hill-top to warn us as it looked out to sea that there was a shore and a limit to this waste of flatness somewhere, for a marsh even, or a brickfield, for anything in the shape of change, for anything that suggested breathing space, for anything that would rouse the current of our stagnating thoughts. I felt suffocated. We seemed shut up in a world all our own, in a world grim and monotonous, from which we could not hope even to enjoy a distant prospect of happier countries beyond our reach. It was like travelling over a boundless desert; worse still, it was like being at the bottom of a well, for we could see nothing but the leafy walls that shut us in and the sky that arched over our heads.

The road drove stubbornly onwards like a sluggish stream, stretching before us in a long straight line that seemed to have no end, suggesting nothing in its stolidity save that it was in the sulks, and determined to worry us out of all patience.

As we passed I looked eagerly at the stiles and gates but they revealed nothing on either side but fields bordered by a hedge and a row of dismal elm trees, with green wrappers round their trunks and pudding-shaped heads, that hung as it were despondently on one side. I looked at these trees that seemed to be gliding slowly up to us, and then to glide as slowly away, that inclined gently one towards the other as if they were spell-bound monsters whispering secrets and laughing at us under their breath, and

they made me feel miserable. Once far away in the distance I saw the outline of a hill, and on a second occasion I peeped through a break in the hedge, and, straining my eyes towards the river which lay to one side of us, was rewarded by the prospect of a long cheerless line of pollards.

The sky hung above us like an enormous dome; the wind whistled sadly, and wherever we went there sounded in our ears the monotonous drowsy hum of the water everlastingly pouring down at the weir.

Oh! that dreariest of walks, that hopeless longing for novelty, that unsatisfied craving for something cheerful. Every now and then we passed a cottage, stiff, whitewashed, and hungry-looking, or by rare good luck fell in with a cluster of newly-built square-windowed houses, one of them empty, another of them a beershop, a third displaying in a broken-spirited way a mixed assortment of bootlaces, cheap confectionery, penny watches, toys, and candles. Once we trudged past a grim mansion designed in the stable-yard style of architecture, with fanlight casements in the upper stories, and fronted by a gravelled court-yard hedged about with high walls, spike-garnished, and enclosing a broad flagstone pavement that curved towards the entrance door from each side of a semi-circular enclosure.

I looked up at this house and noticed that the windows were very black, that they were sunk deep in their embrasures, and had a curious ghastly look like open mouths that had lost their teeth. I shivered, for there was a strange silence brooding over the place; no sunshine had reached it apparently for years. The tall trees that rose behind it, and on either side of it, had a mysterious guilty air, and I wondered whether the house was really inhabited by flesh and blood, or only by ghosts and men of stone and iron. I knew that it would haunt me in my dreams, and yet as we passed away from it I could not help turning my head occasionally to have one more look, and a sort of panic seized me presently, for I half feared, though I would not openly confess as much even to myself, that the spectre mansion or the soulless beings that inhabited it would come running up silently behind us, pounce down upon me uttering an alarming yell, and vanish with that silly little girl who had enraged the monster by looking frightened at it, jumping with huge strides from the every-day world to a vast undefined region of terror and darkness.

Instinctively I put my hand towards the dainty fingers of the goddess, but she did not notice me. In fact all through our walk she had maintained a nearly unbroken silence, and from the expression of her face might have been dead, so that I could not quite satisfy myself whether she was deep in thought or had for

the time being parted with her soul altogether. Once or twice she looked down upon me, seemed to collect her ideas with an effort, and said mechanically, "Are you tired, child?" and on my looking up to her timidly, and answering "No, ma'am," she relapsed into the silence of thought, or of death, whichever it may have been, and we tramped along as before without a word being spoken on either side.

Once we met a tall broad-shouldered man who seemed a mixture of the farmer and the labourer. He had a light brown coat with big pockets that flapped as he walked, a skin waistcoat, worn bare and greasy, a battered black silk hat, enormous nailed shoes, and a thick knotted stick. He touched his hat to the goddess as he passed, murmured some gruff salutation, and went plodding onward with a slow measured stride that seemed to set distance and fatigue at defiance. A few minutes later we fell in with a party of three or four children, very ragged of head and dirty of face, who stuck their fingers in their mouths and curtsied till they almost dropped on their knees. But whoever might greet us, the goddess answered only with an inclination of the head that was purely mechanical, her face remaining composed and expressionless as if her eye took some note of passing events, though she had no real consciousness of them in her heart. Some quarter of an hour or so after the children had faded out of sight we came upon a woman with a sullen hard-featured face and a brick-dusty complexion, who, with her bonnet perched on the top of her head, was standing outside the door of a hovel scolding an urchin that paid no attention to her and dragging down some linen from a clothes-line. She glanced at us half curiously, half defiantly, as we went by, but otherwise took no notice, even of the goddess. I was quite glad presently when we met a flock of sheep, though they had a worried, beseeching look and were at the mercy of a fierce dog and a lad who thrashed them with evident relish. As they trotted wearily past, their bells tinkling doleful music, I pitied them from my heart.

Willingly would I have stopped a little way farther on to see a boy finish drawing up a bucket from a well, and when we met a cow that hung its head over a gate and stared at us stupidly it would have been a relief to have gone up to it and to have entered into one of those curious single-sided conversations, half silly, half thoughtful, that we hold with dumb creatures when we are in an idle meditative mood.

By the time we had returned to the Clock-house it was close upon five. The sunshine had lost little of its brightness, but it was mellowed and saddened. The birds were singing, as only birds can sing, in those full rich pathetic notes that are so pene-



trating and yet have in them no element of shrillness. The softened light, the solemn beauty of the waning day, the gladness of the world around me seemed to intensify my sadness. "I am of little account," I murmured, "everyone and everything is happy, I alone am full of sorrow, and I am not noticed in the least."

The reflection was not philosophical, it was ludicrous in its exaction of sympathy, but at seven years of age we have not learnt wisdom or patience, and my heart was full to bursting.

By an effort—whether old or young—we can keep our spirits up during the day, strange though the land be, and yearning though our hearts, but try as we will we cannot prevent a feeling of loneliness creeping over us in the evening.

I was by myself in a country that I knew not—by myself, for my companions might be friends or enemies, as yet we were strangers, and cared nothing for each other.

I sat down and enjoyed a good cry. Then I rose up ashamed of myself, and knew that what a week or two ago I had counted an impossibility was now a matter of fact. I was home-sick.

Well, be it so! There was nothing contemptible in such a feeling. To have left the dear place and to have forgotten it at once, that would have been something to be ashamed of.

The girls had disappeared, some into the schoolroom, some into the house, and I was left alone to wander about the playground and to amuse myself as best I could.

I walked up and down under the lee of a hospitable wall. I looked at the ivy that waved gently to and fro above my head, and almost envied the spiders that nestled and lay hid amongst the greenery. "Ah! poor things," I thought to myself, "you can build a safe cozy resting place up under the leaves and doze your lives away, peeping out, when you have a fancy to, at the sunshine, travelling a few inches this way or that when tired of dreaming, but you can always be quite close to your own little home, with pleasant natural sounds around you; the gentle sighing of the sorrow-laden wind, the soft pit-a-pat of the summer rain falling on the earth that sucks it in so greedily, the rustle of the broad translucent leaves that shade and shelter your cool cavernous retreats. You want little, and I want little; you love quiet and being by yourselves, so do I; you have your simple occupations, I too am fond of being useful. You can think as much as you please, and there is no one to interrupt you; as for myself, thought brings back scenes that I could dwell upon and cherish for ever. You are in the world and yet out of it, far away from quarrels and jealousies and misunderstandings and painful fears, able to bask in the sunshine, to watch the moonbeams stealing past in the silence of night, to lie for ever at rest

in the bosom of your kind mother, that better world which is so silent and yet can tell so much to those who really love her and study her patiently."

A hum of distant voices lay floating on the air. I said to myself, "It comes from the children at play in the village." I fell adreaming, and at last I could almost believe that I was watching the game that sped so merrily. Big and little were mingled together; boys of all sizes were playing marbles, or wrestling, or flourishing cricket bats; girls in white pinafores, with their hair cut short and tucked back behind their ears, were looking on gravely, breaking at intervals into a joyous laugh, or remonstrating whenever their little brothers' jackets were in danger of being torn in the scuffle. Fat rosy-cheeked babies crawled about, rushed forward on all fours, had to be dragged back out of harm's way, and roared lustily till quieted by some old-fashioned nursery rhyme or a soothing see-saw on the lap of Polly or Susan. I wandered thus far into dreamland and then I murmured sorrowfully to myself, "You are poor children, and you live in cottages, but to-night you will go home and see the father and mother you love so dearly, and you will sleep in the little beds that you have slept in all your lives. Oh! I should not mind being poor and living in a cottage if only I could wake up in the morning and find myself near those I love."

Again my thoughts wandered away to the birds. I could picture them to myself in their nests. Fluffy restless little creatures packed close together, with their tiny mouths wide open, thanking the God who had given them their safe home up amongst the branches. I fancied I could see the whole small family crouched side by side, with the old father and mother bird looking at the young ones fondly. I thought of the little creatures, tired out at last, laying their wee heads close together and dropping off into a dreamless sleep while evening drew her fairy mists over the earth, and one bright star after another rose in the sky, and the moon began to shine in the gathering darkness. "Oh! you dear birds!" my heart cried, "how happy you must be. How I wish I was at home as you are. How I wish I could live in the pure air and rise up at will as you do, soaring far above earth and earth's troubles, towards the heaven that is so calm and holy. How I wish that like you I could always be simple and innocent. How I wish that I had never been naughty and could be sure that I should never be naughty again. How I wish I could lie down at night and pour out my soul to God as guilelessly, as trustfully, as sincerely, as you do.

But the sun sank down in the west, and the song of the birds died into silence and a cold air came creeping up and I shivered,

feeling chillier and more solitary than ever. But, then, as I reflected, the dear birds and the harmless creeping things lie sleeping near me, the ivy leaves still rustle overhead, the gentle flowers that have watched me, and have perhaps pitied me, are closing their leaves and drooping into slumber, the kind wind murmurs a tender lullaby in my ear, perhaps even angels may be hovering, unseen but full of sympathy, around me. So I am not quite alone, for I am near those whom I love, and who, therefore, must love me, and who though I hear them not with my ears can, I know, talk to me and comfort me and advise me even out of the fulness of my own heart.

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## THE VOICE OF NATURE TO THE PRODIGAL.

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'Tis summer's noon, but in the arching shade  
 Of forest boughs yet stirs a gentle breath,  
     Bending with fitful bow  
     The pale hairbell full low ;  
 While the still sunlight in the open glade  
 Pours on the slumb'rous turf a fevered death.

And, 'neath an elm whose spreading branches fill  
 With murmurs musical that peaceful place,  
     One clad in courtly vest  
     Lies in dream-troubled rest,  
 Upon whose haggard cheek and mouth unstill  
 A passion-wasted life hath left its trace.

Oh, Sleep ! thou soothing cheat !—thy mantle drawing  
 Over our cares and woes, thou whisperest peace,  
     Yet renderest them again  
     Endued with sharper pain—  
 Dost thou *so* still the Prodigal's heart-gnawing ?  
 Wilt thou so mock him when his slumbers cease ?

Alas ! although life's cares, their fetters freeing,  
 Haunt dimly and discrowned the hours of sleep ;  
     As mines whose lurid light  
     Shines through earth's rents by night,  
 The traces of a passion-wasted being  
 In the heart's twilight glare more wildly deep.



And such his rest beneath that large elm tree,  
 Who with unconscious presence low reclineth ;  
     Till on his aching sense  
     There comes—he knows not whence—  
 A music not among his dreamery,  
 That through the green turf and the bright air pineth.  
 It sobs upon his heart, half tears, half mirth,  
 And thrill his nerves as with a childlike pleasure ;  
     And while he listens still,  
     With trancèd thought and will,  
 The spiritual harmony floats forth,  
 Embodied into mortal speech and measure,—  
     Gentle and clear  
 As the stream's ripple to the thirsty noon,  
     Upon his ear  
 These murmured meanings swoon.

“ Listen, my son,  
 My wandering one !  
 Thy mother earth, that for thine infant eyes,  
 In sun or shadow made one glad surprise—  
 Who filled thy young heart with her melodies—  
     Speaks yet once more ;  
 And from the wild and desolate passion-track  
 Which to destruction leads, would lure thee back :  
 For joy's unquiet, and for pride's vain rack,  
     Would peace restore.  
 She woos thee by the murmuring of the leaf  
 That soothed to slumber childhood's sobbing grief,  
 Or calmed thy hours of gladness bright and brief,—  
     She bids thee come.  
 By her own hushing winds, her signal flowers—  
 Her voice, all sighs in waterfalls and showers,  
 Or winged and joyous in the summer bowers—  
 She calls thee to the peace of youthful hours ;  
     Bring thy heart home.

“ Listen, my son,  
 My wandering one !  
 Here as thou slumberest on my peaceful breast  
 By the sweet cradle-song of Nature blest,  
 Oh wearied slave of passion's vain unrest,  
     I summon thee—  
 From dreams unhallowed that already pall—  
 Of pride and power, all strife and glare—a thrall,  
 Flower-chain in promise, fetter in its fall.  
     Come and be free !

Come—the great mother pleads to thee who spread  
Flowers for thy grasp, and verdure for thy tread ;  
Who yet must take thee to her heart for dead,  
And dreamless rest.

Think of the trumpet peal that shall command  
That heart to yield thee living, forth to stand  
For Judgment—haply at the dread left hand,  
In terrors drest!

I lay my fresh cool fingers upon thine ;  
With a child's grasp return it thou to mine,  
And walk with me.

Oh ! 'tis a happy, peaceful path, my son,  
That we should follow—for the Loving One  
Waits there to welcome thee."

## INSIDE TEMPLE BAR.

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THE news that, after the many respites which it has obtained, Temple Bar is at last doomed, and that, ere another twelvemonth has passed by, it will have had to give place to the irresistible progress of city improvements, can scarcely be a matter of surprise to any one, more especially to those who have noticed the forlorn and hopeless condition of that historical obstruction now that it has nearly reached the bicentenary\* of its existence. Its ragged side upon the north, where it was joined by the fish-shop and book-stall and hairdresser's shop which have been pulled down to make room for the south-east angle of the new Law Courts; its mud-bespattered gates hanging loosely on their antiquated and rusty hinges, and the woe-begone appearance of its windows above the archway, behind which the ancient ledgers of the banking house of Messrs. Child are stored, all seem as if they prophesied that its last days are at hand for Temple Bar.

It is natural enough to feel regret for the approaching disappearance of a relic whose history is associated with bygone events; but this nineteenth century is a busy age; and its exigencies are such that it really cannot afford to allow an unnecessary barrier any longer to "stop the way" in one of the two great thoroughfares of London. The "Bar," therefore, which has been associated for two centuries with the names of Wren, and Goldsmith, and Johnson, and Lord Lovat and the Jacobite rebels, and Lord Mayors innumerable, and for which the late Mr. Peter Cunningham pleaded so earnestly, must consider that its last day has arrived. Fleet Street, in spite of the measure of relief so tardily afforded by the Embankment, sadly needs widening at its western *debouchement*. We can only hope that the authorities in whose hands its fate rests will deal tenderly with a gateway which the citizens of London have claimed the traditional right of closing even against royalty itself; and that they will allow it to be re-erected, either as a gate at one of the entrances to the Temple with which its name connects it, or in some other historic spot, where the curious may still behold the arch on which the heads of

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\* The present building was commenced in 1670 and completed in 1672.



the rebels were exposed within the memory of the fathers of some of our readers.

Antiquaries tell us that from time immemorial a bar or barrier of some kind stood at this spot, like a statue of the God Terminus, to mark the limits of the rival cities of London and Westminster,\* or possibly, to speak more correctly, the spot where the freedom of the city ends. Whether the "bar" was originally a mere chain or not, is uncertain; but for whatever structure stood here during the reigns of our Norman and Plantagenet kings, the citizens of London were probably indebted to the Knights Templars, who were located hard by to the south-east. It is alluded to, however, in a grant dated the twenty-ninth of Edward I., A.D. 1301, and it is subsequently mentioned in petitions to Parliament about fifteen years later. It is probable that it was destroyed in the rebellion of Wat Tyler.

In spite of the strictest search, no allusion to it as a gate, properly speaking, is to be found before the sixteenth century; the first entry in the city records, dated in 1502, relates to the custody of Temple Bar at a period of popular excitement, the cause of which is not stated; but it is clear that the structure at this date was a building, and not a mere "bar." Thirty years later we find it on record that Anne Boleyn passed under Temple Bar on her way from the Tower to her coronation at Westminster Abbey; and there is extant an engraving of a picture† of the Bar at this date, which shows it to have been an important structure. After this, Philip and Mary, we are told, were greeted at Temple Bar at the time of their marriage with an oration in Latin. Elizabeth, James, Charles, Oliver Cromwell, and Charles II. each and all had its gates opened at their approach and passed under it in turn. "Whether Temple Bar suffered any damage at the time of the civil war, when the chains and posts without the walls were removed in 1648, we are not informed: but we are told that Cromwell, Fairfax, Bradshaw, Monk, and Charles II. all halted at the gate, in the time of their prosperity, and that beneath its shade were enacted those scenes of political excitement of one of which Hogarth has given us a curious picture, with the still more curious circumstance that in his plate he represents the present Bar as standing some dozen years before its time."

The old "Bar" itself, as shown in Hollar's map of London,

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\* This can scarcely be true literally, as the boundaries of London and Westminster have varied considerably at different times, and were not definitely fixed at Temple Bar till the time of the Stuarts.

† This picture, or rather series of pictures, giving several views of this procession, used to adorn the walls of Cowdray House, Sussex; but it was destroyed in the fire which laid that mansion level with the dust.

exhibits a gateway with a centre arch and two side arches, as at present. With the exception of the carving of the Royal Arms over the carriage-way, and those of the City over the posterns for foot-passengers, and some foliage on the pediment and architrave, the old Bar was architecturally as plain as possible. The roof of the building was slanting, with gables; and between the three openings for traffic stood two columns with plain pedestals, and there was another column at each end. An engraving of this structure will be found in the *Illustrated London News*, March 28th, 1863.

Three years, however, had scarcely passed after the coronation of Charles II., ere the fate of old Temple Bar was sealed. It was agreed between the magnates of "East and West London" that it was desirable that the Bar, which had so narrowly escaped from the great fire, should be pulled down and rebuilt on a somewhat more convenient scale. King Charles himself took great interest in the plan, as is clear from several documents still extant in the Record Office; among others the following, which is addressed by the king to the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London:—

"And finding great inconvenience for want of ye opening of Temple Barr and ye passage and gatehouse of Cheapside into St. Paul's Churchyard, both which are mentioned in ye Act and have been divers times recommended by us, we desire you would forthwith cause ye same to bee putt in execution, according to such contracts as are already or shall be made with you. And although wee recommend this now particularly to your care, wee do hereby promise you to make it our expressly concerne by *aiding and encouraging* ye effectuell execution of it from time to time since wee have made this our city ye place of our royall residence and doe continue to receive from it such marks of loyalty."

Here was a promise of financial aid from the king; how far it was subsequently redeemed may be easily guessed from his conduct in other more important matters—the building of St. Paul's to wit. Architects, however, were consulted, in order to carry out the royal will: among others, Inigo Jones; though the matter went in his case no further than the production of a design, which, had it been accepted, would have given to London a triumphal arch really worthy of the name. The original design is still extant in an engraving, and also a description of it is to be found in the manuscripts in the British Museum. Had Jones's plan been carried out, there would have been statues at the summit of each corner, and over the centre upon a pedestal a fine equestrian statue—of the king, we suppose,—with other carvings and medallions on the face of the buildings.

It was on the 27th of June, 1669, that it was finally determined between the court and the city that the Bar should be pulled down and rebuilt, and a month later Sir Cristopher Wren was called

into council on the matter. The cost of the new building, to the extent of £1005, was to be defrayed out of certain funds arising from the introduction of hackney coaches.

The first stone of the new Bar, it would appear, must have been laid in 1670. In two years the plan of Sir Christopher Wren was fully carried out, and the present was the result. It is not a little singular that in the chronicle of the great architect's life, a work in the handwriting of his son, in the British Museum, there is no mention of the Bar except the mere date of its erection. Sir Christopher Wren's own Ledger, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, is equally meagre. The documents in the Record Office are silent, and it is only in a folio volume of expenses of public buildings after the Great Fire, now in the Library at Guildhall, that under the date of 1671, we read of "*Porta urbis, vulgo dicta Temple Bar.*" On folio 30 of this volume, under the heading of "*Temple Barr,*" with a note attached, "*Cash out of the Chamber,*" we find an account of the payments made during the time of its erection. These range over a period of three years, from August 14, 1669, to March 10, 1672—3, and amount in all to the model sum of £1397 10s., including the four effigies, which cost £480. The sculptor of these was a certain John Bushnell. The statues themselves, which have suffered sadly from the weather or from rough treatment, or from both, represent James I. and his queen, Anne of Denmark, on the City side, and Charles I. and Charles II. on the Westminster side. The present dirty and dingy gates were put up new at the time of Nelson's funeral; they are of oak, panelled, and surmounted by festoons of flowers and fruit. Many persons now alive remember them when they looked bright, and even elegant; but if it be true that, five years ago, nearly 12,000 vehicles passed under the archway in twelve hours, who can wonder that the gates are splashed with venerable mud? It may be desirable to add here, that the present structure is of the Corinthian order, and is built of Portland stone. Each façade has four Corinthian pilasters, an entablature, and an arched pediment. Over the keystone of the arch were formerly a pair of large coats of arms in stone; those of the City on the east side, and those of the King on the west. The former, however, fell down in 1828; and the Royal Arms were removed in 1852, to make room for the funeral decorations in honour of the Duke of Wellington, and neither the one nor the other has since been restored.

If the stones of Temple Bar could speak, they would, no doubt, be able to tell us many a tale of street brawls, Mohawk riots, and drunken frolics, as well as of more serious disturbances of a party character. They must have witnessed many a Pope burnt in



effigy, and the "Gordon Riots" of 1780, as well as the more recent political outbreaks of the present century, to which we need not allude.

It is a curious fact that, just as Blackfriars Bridge stood for a century, and then was sentenced to come down, Temple Bar had no sooner celebrated its centenary than it found its existence to be to some extent doomed. But "doomed persons live long;" and for a hundred years the cry for its demolition has been raised at intervals. In 1766, John Gwynn, in his "London and Westminster Improved," suggested not only the widening of the Strand and Fleet Street, and the formation of a quay on both sides of the river, but also the removal of Temple Bar as the "greatest nuisance" to the City. In 1789, however, it had a very narrow escape. A year or two previously, Alderman Pickett had petitioned the Court of Common Council for the removal of certain obstructions to the City traffic, and he followed up this petition by introducing a resolution to the effect that Temple Bar should be taken down and the materials sold. This motion was lost by a majority of one. The alderman, however, was not a man to be easily beaten; he brought forward resolution upon resolution year after year, and sent round to all the members of the court a printed letter, urging the necessity of widening the Strand and Fleet Street, and pulling down the gateway. At last, in 1789, he published a pamphlet in 4to, in which he vehemently denounced the personal character of the poor Bar as not only a "great nuisance," but a "screen for filth," a "shelter and protection for thieves and pick-pockets," and above all, as "preventing a free circulation of air." In its place, he proposed to erect "a noble and ornamental pilaster on each side of the street, with chains agreeable to the ancient Bars," which, he hoped, would answer every purpose for preserving the City rights intact. And what was more, as he saw that the fear of expense kept the Common Council from giving its consent, he offered to head a subscription for the removal of the Bar with £100 out of his own pocket.

At last he got a committee appointed to report upon his plans. It was then found that the purchase of the freeholders' interests, and the removal of the houses in order to widen the street on each side, and the pulling down of the Bar, would cost something over £120,000. An Act, however, was obtained, which allowed the Corporation of London seven years to purchase the buildings, and ten to complete the improvements. The notorious "Butchers' Row," accordingly, was removed, and the Strand was widened from St. Clement's Church to the Bar; but there the matter ended. The new houses erected on the north side—now swept away to make room for the new Law Courts—turned out a failure; the

alderman died ; and the subject was tacitly allowed to drop, the attention of the Parliament and Government being directed too closely to the outburst of the French Revolution and the subsequent movements of the great Napoleon, to allow them to bestow a thought on such a commonplace matter as a social improvement in London.

Having had this all but miraculous escape from destruction, the Bar was destined to witness a succession of important events. In 1802, it was gaily hung with oil-lamps (gas then being an unknown luxury) in honour of the Peace of Amiens. In 1806, it received the body of Nelson on its triumphal car on its way from Trafalgar to St. Paul's. In 1814, it was again illuminated in honour of the visit of the Allied Sovereigns, who passed through it on their way to dine at Guildhall, accompanied by the Duke of Wellington. In 1820, Queen Caroline passed under it on her way to St. Paul's to give thanks for, we fear, a very small instalment of mercies ; and a year later her corpse was carried through it on its way to Harwich *en route* for its last resting-place at Brandenburg. In 1830, the Bar looked down as in grim derision upon a Reform riot, in consequence of the unpopularity of the Duke of Wellington and the new police, and the postponement of the expected visit of the King and Queen to the City. On Lord Mayor's Day, 1837, the Bar was once more illuminated on the occasion of Her Majesty's first state visit to the City to dine with the Lord Mayor at Guildhall ; and again, in 1844, Queen Victoria passed beneath it in state when she went to reopen the Royal Exchange. And to come to more recent times, in 1858 the Princess Royal and her husband, the Crown Prince of Prussia, in a storm of snow, passed through its open gates on their way to Berlin. And, in 1863, who of us can fail to remember how magnificently decorated was the City Gate when the citizens of London offered their loud greetings of "welcome" to the Princess Alexandra of Denmark on landing upon our shores as the bride of our own Prince of Wales ? More recently still, there have passed through it the King of the Belgians, the Viceroy of Egypt, and the Sultan of Turkey.

In 1853 the cry for the removal of the Bar was renewed in the papers ; but it quietly died away, and nothing was done. In 1858 the Metropolitan Board of Works politely reminded the Corporation that "Temple Bar presents an obstruction to the traffic of the Strand and Fleet Street ;" but again with the same result,—for nothing was done : in 1861 the Court of Common Council tried to turn the tables on the Board by resolving that the Bar was really no obstruction at all, and they actually passed a resolution "discharging" all further reference to the subject,

although only a few years previously the citizens of London had refused to spend even the modest sum of £1500 in order to put it in repair. From that day to this, however, owing to the mooted question of the new Law Courts, and the necessity of a new bridge connecting them with the Temple, the Bar has lived a doomed life, and is now practically sentenced to death, although a variety of circumstances may conspire to prolong its reprieve. In 1868 the cry was raised that the structure was unsafe, and, if not repaired, would soon tumble about our ears; but the alarm subsided speedily.

The following description of an ancient custom which henceforth must of necessity die away, we may be pardoned for transferring to our pages from those of "Belgravia." "Here, on those rare occasions when Royalty visits the City, the gates are closed in order that a curious and old custom may be performed with becoming dignity. The royal procession having arrived at the gate which is the entrance to the civic domain, the herald sounds a trumpet and knocks thrice upon the closed doors, which are immediately thrown open, and the Lord Mayor for the time being makes over his sword of state to the sovereign, who is graciously pleased to return it. Such is the custom of the present day, and such it has been for many centuries.

"When the Spanish Armada was driven from our shores, and good Queen Bess proceeded to St. Paul's to give public thanks for so great a deliverance, the same ceremony was enacted. And Cromwell some years later, when he and his parliament dined in state in the city, allowed the old custom to be carried out, but with this difference, that the sword was delivered up to the Speaker, instead of to the Head of the State. After Marlborough had humbled France at Oudenarde, Blenheim, Malplaquet, and Ramillies, Queen Anne went through the same ceremony, when she too proceeded to give thanks at St. Paul's."

The same writer observes on another page:—"In the dirt-begrimed niches, two on either side of the archway, are statues representing James I., his Queen, Charles I., and Charles II. And on the gate above, in more recent times, were put up ornaments of another description. Here, for the edification of his Majesty's liege subjects, the mangled remains of Thomas Armstrong, one of the Rye House plot conspirators, were displayed. And here, too, might be seen, a little later, dangling in the wind, the quarters of Sir John Friend and Sir Wm. Perkins, who attempted the life of William III. The last mementos of this usage appeared in the year 1745, when the heads of Lord Lovat and several others of the unfortunate followers of the so-called "Pretender" were placed upon the bar—a grim and unedifying spectacle,



one would fancy, for business men. But people in those days thought otherwise; for Walpole, in a letter to Montague, says, 'I have been this morning to the Tower, and passed under the new heads at Temple Bar, where people make a trade of letting spying-glasses at a half-penny a look.' It was here, too, that Dr. Johnson, a true Jacobite at heart, stood with Goldsmith, and, pointing to the heads that still disfigured the gateway, exclaimed, with some hidden humour, '*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis !*' "

But an account of Temple Bar would be quite incomplete if we were to dwell merely on its outside features and did not stop to say a word or two about its interior, and about the banking house of Messrs. Child, of which that interior forms a part.

It is well known that it was only gradually that the goldsmiths and silversmiths of London changed their especial trade for that of "bankers" in the modern sense of the term; and all readers of the "*Fortunes of Nigel*" will remember that Fleet Street and Whitefriars were the head-quarters of those worthies. As a proof of this assertion we may here quote an entry from what may be called the earliest known "London Post Office Directory," which was reprinted a few years ago by the enterprising Mr. Hotten, of Piccadilly. In a list of "all the Goldsmiths that keep running cashes" in London, we find the names of "Messrs. Richard Blanchard and Child, at the Marygold, in Fleet Street;" the only other now existing banking firm that is mentioned is that of "Messrs. Hoare (or, as the name is there spelt, 'Hore'), at the Golden Bottle, in Cheapside."

But it is time to enter in; so, passing through Messrs. Child's bank, we go upstairs to the first floor, and are shown into a small parlour in which hangs Sir T. Lawrence's portrait of the late Lady Jersey as she shone a "Court Beauty" at the coronation of George IV., and also another picture to which we shall presently allude at greater length. Cut in, or rather through, the old city wall of which the Bar itself is but a continuation, there are some steps to be mounted, like the entry to a church belfry; and our way lies on through a crooked passage over which might be written as well as over the doorway of a cathedral, the couplet,

" See that ye make the western portals low;  
Let none here enter who disdain to bow."

When we have cleared this passage, we are inside the chamber of Temple Bar itself. It is panelled in the style of the period at which it was built, and lined from top to bottom with the ledgers and journals of Messrs. Child which have accumulated for the last two hundred years.

On our right hand and our left are windows looking down into Fleet Street and the Strand respectively. Their frames are scarcely weatherproof, and they look as if they have not been dusted or cleaned for years. This, however, is the room which has been always used for the accommodation of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen as often as they have come to the Bar in state in order to receive royalty, or for other purposes, as for example on the occasion of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington.

We gaze in awe and wonder at these mute memorials of the "accounts" of customers—who have all long since gone to their own last account; and, passing on into an inner chamber still more dusty and grimy than the outer one, we are confronted by an almost perpendicular ladder, having climbed which we are in the "attic." Here the dust is venerable and positively solid; the ledgers and journals are still older, many of them belonging to the seventeenth century. Among the other treasures of the bank which are kept here, are to be seen piles on piles of the bank-notes issued by the firm in the early part of the last century, before the right of issuing such paper money was restricted by law to the Bank of England. There are hundreds upon hundreds of these, rotting with age and covered with dust and dirt in this upper story; and each of them bears in dexter upper corner an engraving of the Bar as it then appeared. A facsimile of this engraving is given as a tail-piece to this article. It is singular that the house of Messrs. Child should have let this venerable "trade mark" fall into disuse.

The books of the banking firm, its ledgers and journals, which line the walls of the house and of the room over the archway, fill about seventy or eighty shelves; and the large amounts with which the early volumes deal, leave no room to doubt that the transactions of Messrs. Child extend back to a still more remote date.

The list of customers of the bank two centuries ago, as revealed to us by a casual glance at the headings of the banking accounts in Messrs. Child's ledgers, is a very distinguished one. In 1687 we find not only those of "the King's and Queen's Majesties," but of the Dukes of Newcastle, Bolton, Leeds, Buckingham, and Albemarle, the Marquises of Winchester and Carmarthen, Lords Danby, Halifax, Mulgrave, Rivers, Crewe, Thanet, Exeter, and Torrington, of the "Tellers of the Exchequer," of Lady Anne Walpole, of Horace Walpole, Esq., and his lady, and of such families as the Coke, Proby, Brook Bridges, Vyner, and Jenyns—very many of whose heads and representatives still continue as customers to the present time. Some of these accounts, to judge from a single page, must have been very large. For instance, there appears standing to the credit of the then Duke of New-

castle £12,670, while on the opposite page his Grace's drafts appear as only £412. The Duke of Albemarle in like manner is credited a few pages further on with £40,743; but against this he appears to have drawn two cheques within a few days of each other to the tune of £15,000 a-piece. The Duke of Bolton's account, on the other hand, stands only at £197, and this sum he seems to have drawn out in dribblets almost as soon as it was paid in.

Messrs. Child, however, appear to have done also a little business as jewellers; for in the private account of "the King's and Queen's Majesties," under date 1687, May 17, we find the following entries on the debtor side: "For loan of jewels for the coronation to the Queen, £222;" "for diamond earrings for the Queen, £300;" "for a ring for his Majesty's own hand, £215." On the same page and on the following are similar entries for rings given by James to the Ambassadors from France, Savoy, and other countries.

In one of these ledgers we were shown the banking account of Nell Gwynn. It is headed "the honourable Madame Gwynn, Cr." There are only three or four entries on this page; but it appears that Messrs. Child had advanced to her on the security of plate no less than £4,600, and that after her death she owed the bank, on a debtor and creditor account, £808 14s. 3d. Among her assets, however, were 14,443 ounces of plate, which realized £2,300; and the statement of account between the bank and her representatives, the Duke of St. Albans, and other well-known personages, bears the signatures of the Earls of Rochester and Pembroke, H. Sydney, and R. Sawyer. The account is dated 1687, January ye seventh.

It appears that at this time, and even to a very much later date, no such machinery as that of "Pass Books" was known, but that customers were in the habit of calling occasionally when they came to town in order to see how they stood with their bankers, and that when they were satisfied they wrote in the ledgers "I allow this account," adding their signatures and the date; when this was done, the balance was carried forward as the commencement of a fresh account.

In the room through which alone you can gain access to the interior of Temple Bar, hangs a curious picture of the structure apparently about a hundred and twenty years old. It is very much in the style of Hogarth; it gives the western front; and through the arch up the vista of Fleet Street you see the church of St. Dunstan with its figures of Gog and Magog, which stood there till our own days, when Lord Hertford removed them to his villa in the Regent's Park. On your right as you look at the picture is Messrs. Child's bank, and wonderfully little has it altered



in outward appearance. The shop on the north side which ten years ago was occupied by Messrs. Reeves and Turner, the eminent second-hand booksellers,\* was then apparently a confectioner's, if we may judge from the glasses in the windows, which look as if they were full of sugar plums. It is May-day, and a "Jack in the Green" is being carried or led near the pavement on the south, much to the amusement of the little gamins, whose ragged and tattered clothes bespeak the gutter children. On the north side is a young "swell" of the period, neatly and fashionably dressed, with sword, wig, and wig-box all *en règle*; he is chatting with a cit on the weather or some passing topic, and a sweep comes behind him and prints the marks of his five dirty fingers on the back of his pale-coloured coat. The drayman who is passing enjoys the fun, as also does the driver of a vehicle under the archway, which looks for all the world like one of those huge wheeled cabs where the driver sat aloft, and which were so common in London about thirty years ago.

The heads, or rather skulls, of the "rebel Lords"—Lovat and Derwentwater—which are seen on high poles at the top of the picture, help us at all events to fix the date of the painting at about 1750—60, and remind us of the horrors of the civil war even when waged on a small scale. It is a tradition in Messrs. Child's bank that the head of Lord Lovat, when taken down from the pole, was kept for some years in the upper story of Temple Bar, and eventually given up to the Frasers, of whose clan Lord Lovat was the chief. It is stated by Mr. Noble, in a recently published antiquarian work on Temple Bar,† that the painter of this picture was a Mr. Michael Angelo Rooker, one of the earliest Associates of the Royal Academy, who died in 1801, and lies buried in the cemetery of St. Giles'-in-the-Fields. Mr. Noble says that the picture was painted in 1772; but as the last of the skulls fell down in 1770, it is clear that if his date is correct, in that case the artist has been purposely guilty of an anachronism, though perhaps a pardonable one.

The back portion of the premises of Messrs. Child's bank are part and parcel of the once celebrated "Devil Tavern,"—originally the "Devil and St. Dunstan,"—a place of resort as old certainly as the reign of James I. Here the celebrated "Apollo" club used to meet; here Ben Jonson composed some of his plays, more particularly "The Devill is an Asse." Here also Dean Swift, Steele, Garth, and Addison dined in 1710; and here for several years, about 1746—1750, the Royal Society held its dinners. The

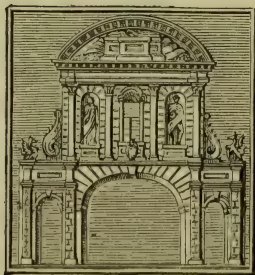
\* It was in this shop that the fortune of John Crockford, the founder of "Crockford's" was made early in the present century.

† Memorials of Temple Bar, by J. C. Noble. Diprose and Bateman, 1869.

sign-board of the "Devil" is shown by Hogarth in his "Burning of the Rumps," but, curiously enough, he places it on the wrong side of the street. On the wall of one of the rooms, in which Steele wrote, and which still remains in much the same state in which it stood a century and a half ago, and the wainscot over the fire-place are painted the following convivial lines, which date back probably as far as the year 1600. As they have never been published in full, we give them at length, the more willingly as we understand that together with Temple Bar itself this old house too is doomed to come down, and probably in a few months more will have passed away:—

Welcome all who lead or follow  
 To the oracle of Apollo.  
 Here he speaks out of his pottle;  
 Or the Tripes, his Tower-Bottle.  
 All his answers are divine;  
 Truth itself doth flow in wine.  
 "Hang up all the poor hop-drinkers"  
 Cries old Sym, the King of Skinkers.  
 He that half of life abuses,  
 That sits watering with the Muses,  
 Those dull girls, no harm can mean us;  
 Wine it is the milk of Venus,  
 And the poet's horse accounted,  
 Ply it, and you all are mounted.  
 'Tis the true Phæbian (*sic*) liquor,  
 Cheers the brains, makes wit the quicker;  
 Pays all debts, cures all diseases,  
 And at once three senses pleases.  
 Welcome all who lead or follow  
 To the oracle of Apollo.

O! RARE BEN JONSON!



## TRADITION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF DEAD-AND-ALIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS.

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"Your traditions," remarked once a Russian naval officer in reference to the prowess of British seamen, "are your force." This opinion was elicited by a compliment paid to the fine appearance of a Russian boat's crew from a ship of war at Spithead. The *physique* of the men was certainly magnificent, and taken together with their thoroughly nautical look was sufficient to satisfy the most exacting of professional critics. Yet the gallant gentleman who commanded them sighed for something more. True, that their ship-shape rig-out and freedom of motion put to flight all the absurd stories of the unhandiness of Russian men-o'-war's men, their standing "attention" when addressed by officers, &c., &c.; yet what were stalwart forms, guernsey shirts, open collars, black silk neckerchiefs, and duck trousers, when there were no remembrances of past achievements to animate the wearers? "Your traditions are your force."

Pondering in my own mind over the incontrovertible truth here conveyed, I resolved to take an early opportunity of venturing upon an analysis of this important element in our national success.

Tradition! What is it? A flag? A song? A word? A victory? It is all these. They are its expressions, its tangible forms. Every one must admit, for instance, that our dear old flag—associated as it is with so much that is glorious in our history—is one of the best traditions belonging to us.

Songs, again, from the Psalmist downwards, have perpetuated the joys and the sorrows of nations. A single word, shouted in the front of charging squadrons, has nerved the arms of hundreds for the fray. Lastly, there is that magic trisyllable, "Victory!" Why, its very sound is emphatic and suggestive to the last degree! From the centres of civilization, to the remotest prairies where Indian warriors tell their tales of valour by the bivouac fire, the whole world recognizes the conservative principle of tradition. Even our transatlantic cousins, with all their go-aheadedness, are they not always "looking back" to a certain fourth of July? Happy the country whose sons are stimulated by recollections of



its past ! When such are disregarded, or lose their value, what greater proof is needed of that country's weakness and decay ? Having regard to its traditions, Spain should be the most powerful country on the face of the earth. Is it ? How many Spaniards are there of the uneducated classes who know anything of an obscure individual named Cortez ? On the other hand, how few English are there, in the same rank of life, who have never heard of an equally insignificant person styled Admiral Lord Nelson ? Those Russian seamen, believe me, had the best aids to success in their profession which it was possible to obtain ; good officers, good ships, and as good guns as money could procure. Yet there was something lacking which money could *not* buy. That something was tradition. No Nile, no Cape St. Vincent, no Trafalgar, to recall with swelling heart and moistening eye ; little, very little else but a sunken fleet in a southern sea.

As I have begun with the navy I will go on with the navy. In a maritime country like our own that noble profession is entitled to precedence ; that is to say if precedence is worth anything in considering the deeds of our countrymen by land and sea. One of the oldest traditions, then, if not the very oldest, was that the service was "going to the devil." There is some comfort to us degenerate moderns in the reflection that it hasn't got there yet. Curious, though, the persistency with which this amusing fallacy was handed down from father to son, from captain to lieutenant, from lieutenant to midshipman. According to Captain Marryat, it had its rise at the period when the king sent his son (Duke of Clarence) to sea. The royal example was extensively followed in the upper ranks of society. The consequence was that the navy was flooded with young men of family, who, it was predicted by the "rough and readies," would be too dainty for the work. Greatly, perhaps, to the disgust of these worthies, the new comers proved themselves as staunch as the old, for they took quite as cheerfully to the hard knocks and hard life as the rum-drinking heroes of yore. With all respect for such an authority as Captain Marryat, I fancy that the saying had a remoter origin than he ascribes to it. If the truth could be ascertained, I have no doubt that Old Benbow said precisely the same thing in precisely the same words. The present generation has heard the last of it ; but one can scarcely imagine a more traditional tradition.

The sea, like the land, has been shorn by science of much of the romance formerly belonging to it. If the screaming, thundering express has superseded the glories of the four-horsed mail, no less a revolution has been effected on the ocean by the steam iron-clads of to-day. The ship of the past was certainly an unwieldy structure, but its management called forth all the energies of its crew. It did its work in forming the *personel* of the navy. It

founded our traditions. At the present time we hear rather too much about plates and guns, and rather too little about *men*. In the old days the men were the first consideration. Given, a good crew, all the rest followed as a matter of course. Not but what our Admiralty authorities are far more careful than their predecessors in the selection of seamen, but one is apt to get just a trifle tired of the continual references in reports to thickness of plating or backing, and no reference whatever to the brave hearts behind it. Yet I question whether there is any naval reformer, however ardent, who has not a corner of his heart for the old days ; for the stately line of battle, the Barfleurs, the Minotaurs, the Bellerophons, advancing grandly to attack, and majestically disregarding the opening fire of the enemy. How naval actions will be decided in the future no one can tell. Of this we may be certain, that there will be no more weather gage, no more yard-arm to yard-arm, no more calling away the boarders ; nothing but a pitiless, crashing, murderous duel. Should a future Dibdin arise, he will have to sing other lays than the "Saucy Arethusa," or "Britons Strike Home." The "Bony" of our days is, as far as we are concerned, a pacific old gentleman, with whom we are hand and glove, and with whose sailors our own have fought side by side. Still, with all deference to our gallant allies, we can never afford to let our hard-won laurels fade, nor cease to venerate that blood-stained uniform in its Greenwich shrine. Though our traditions henceforth will be our defence merely, with such examples before us "England" will never vainly "expect every man to do his duty."

For the traditions of the sister service we might search very far back in history indeed ; long before Drake and Frobisher thrashed the Spaniards ; far back to the days of the cloth yard shaft, to Agincourt, to Poitiers. But, for all practical purposes, the traditions of the British army may be said to commence with the campaigns of Marlborough. That masterly tactician was a great manufacturer of the article. His four famous battles of Ramilies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, and Blenheim, were fine starting points, establishing as they did the reputation of our infantry for steadiness. True, that the nation had witnessed plenty of civil war in years just previous, but victories are only valuable as traditions when gained over a foreign foe. Marlborough, with all his genius, was only a fine weather general. In winter he kept his troops in snug, warm cantonments, thereby losing not a little glory, but saving not a few men. It was reserved for Sir John Moore, and later still, our commanders in the Crimea, to demonstrate that the resolution of British soldiers was proof against the elements equally with the fire and steel of the enemy. By-the-bye, Sir John Moore in his own person is a most noble tradition.

He may be styled the Nelson of the army. The romantic circumstances attending his death and subsequent burial deserved to be embalmed, as they have been, in verse so beautiful as to raise the envy even of Byron. Wolfe and Abercrombie, too, dying in the arms of victory, have bequeathed to us traditions none the less glorious. Notwithstanding these great names, I imagine that service traditions are better appreciated before the mast than by the rank and file. When a hostile vessel of superior force has been captured by sheer hard fighting, somehow the navy generally has had more of the credit than the people immediately concerned. The reason of this is not far to seek. Their cruise over, the majority of the men who made that capture would be dispersed to the four winds, perhaps to reengage in a hundred different vessels. Meanwhile, however, the deed had gone to swell the long roll of naval traditions. In the army, on the contrary, the traditions are more regimental. Rustic recruits, spelling over the uncouth foreign names on the colours, inquire the meaning of this motto or that device; and no doubt those legends have a salutary effect in raising the *esprit de corps* of the veriest clod who took the shilling. Nearly every British regiment has some tradition which is its own peculiar property. Thus, a certain infantry corps was once, while in line, attacked by cavalry *from behind*. The horsemen were repulsed by the rear rank facing about and delivering its volley in the very nick of time, for which exploit the regiment still enjoys some special privileges. Imagine round what a many guard-room fires that tradition has been related! A lancer regiment carries on its saddle-cloths a representation of a death's head and cross bones, in commemoration of an equally heroic achievement. I have no military historian handy, or instances might be multiplied.

The exigencies of our Indian empire, with its crowd of associations, helped to fashion that host and that leader which were destined, in the Peninsular War, to crown the edifice of our military traditions. Our fine old Iron Duke it was, chiefly, whose deeds have thrown such a glamour round our colours. That single figure, standing out against the smoke of many a battle-field, eclipses, as we contemplate it, all other traditions. His whole life, indeed, from his first skirmish at Alost to the blood and mud and bayonets and cuirassiers of Waterloo, is the grandest tradition which we can pass on to posterity.

Truly, our traditions are our force. Since the Roman maidens twined the laurel leaves in their hair, the world has not seen such a coronet as the shamrock and the thistle, the thistle and the rose. Other crowns may be over and over again lost and won, but that simple diadem, let us hope, all enemies notwithstanding, no time will see torn asunder.



## IN THE LAND OF THE LEEK.

"Taffy was a Welshman."—ANCIENT BALLAD.

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IN the present stirring times, when the war-clarion is sounding through Europe, and people's eyes are turned towards the German Rhine, whereon two mighty nations are closing for the death-grapple, I am afraid that very few will condescend to pay much attention to the quiet holiday reverie of a hard-worked parson taking his pleasure in a small Welsh village by the summer sea.

Methinks that between the writer of this paper and the grimly-facetious Dean of St. Patrick's there will be at least this one parallel. I, like him, for lack of better audience shall be constrained to say, "Dearly beloved John." For this my article is intended to be about very common people indeed—people remarkable for nothing except doing their duty "in that state of life," &c., and fearing God, yet withal a people very much misrepresented and sometimes vilified by writers who do not take the trouble to dig into the inner crust of their lives—a people whom it is made the fashion to ignore altogether, as if they were a dead race and speaking a dead tongue; and, with all this, a people who have broad national characteristics, sterling virtues, honest natures, and a language which the Greek alone can match in point of power and inflection—the Cymri, the dwellers in the highlands and lowlands of Wales.

Now, if it were not for the superb insolence of the comparison, I might say that this humble holiday talk of mine were like that beautiful harvest idyll, the "Book of Ruth," which peeps out so quietly, shrinking amid the clash of arms and the roar of the battle like a violet nestled amongst green leaves. For whilst the daily prints are full of the story of the deadly war; while all the correspondents, special and otherwise, are racking their brains for the most powerful language wherein to paint "battle's magnificently stern array;" I am but prepared to chatter garrulously about a month of quiet enjoyment while thousands are being murdered wholesale on the banks of the fair river, and staining its waters with their blood, and the carrion birds are flying heavily to their prey.

I cannot expect much sympathy for the fate of one wretched  
e girl starved to death by her parents and over-zealous experi-

mentalists, and furnishing a little wonder to the gaping world as the Welsh fasting girl. However, as the American thoughtfully observed, "It takes all sorts to make a world," and the same variety to make up the matter of the current number of a magazine, and although "*non omnes arbusta jurant, humilesque myricæ*," I may hope that some slight interest may be felt in the honest folk concerning whom I shall essay to speak when the holiday time comes round to the working-men of England—the toiling, struggling, professional classes whose occupation keeps them very much confined.

There is always the discomfiting question, suggesting itself to mar the pleasure of the holiday, "Where shall we go?" Anywhere, anywhere out of the smoky, noisy, labour-haunted town, where the chariot wheels of Life drag so heavily, clogged as they are with greed, and want, and misery! Anywhere to get a good healthy mouthful of God's blessed air, and to see the grand old mother Earth in her majestic beauty, or make a reverent bow to the earth's twin marvel—the awful ocean. But when the question of ways and means comes to be discussed, when the resources of a purse by no means fashioned after the happy manner of Fortunatus come to be tested, there recurs the oft asked question, "Where shall we go?" And this was the query which a hard-worked parish priest put to himself on the approach of the blessed holimonth.

Emancipation from unending, unvarying toil amongst the poor and ignorant, from threading one's weary way morning, noon and night, amongst the rabbit-hutches which are by courtesy called cottages, from grinding away at the same subjects sabbath after sabbath, and unable to invest with a new interest that which is as old as the eternal hills—the mere cessation from the round of work was sufficiently pleasurable; but to make the holiday beneficial there must be change of air, change of scene. *Nova petenda tellus*, a new world must be sought out, where the sky should be cloudless, not dimmed and poisoned by a grim canopy of smoke—the unceasing whirr of the machinery, the comfortless rattle of the loom, the frightful shriek of the "buzzer," which calls the collier to his work exchanged for the sounds of nature and the country; and for the town which man made and spoilt too, the country which God's hand fashioned.

But where? Thanks to the impending war-alarms, people not only had no desire whatever to travel on the continent, but hurried away from their favourite spots like a flock of pigeons frightened by the hawk. The noise of the *roulette* table ceased in Baden, and the gorgeous Karsaal became like the city of the dead. No longer did the band make sweet voluptuous music amongst the

lindens, for the players were gone to fight for the much loved Fatherland. Besides, it is not every clergyman whose magnificent stipend will see him through a continental tour.

Then there arose visions of the Highlands, the English lakes, the host of watering-places, dear and cheap, fashionable and unfashionable; from Scarborough, haunt of the upper classes in the season, and resplendent with cotton and shoddy, down to Pedlington-by-the-Sea, where no one above the rank of a small shop-keeper will dare be seen.

But by-and-bye, however, cutting the Gordian knot in the most effectual manner, came an invitation to spend my hard-earned holidays amongst some people whom I should know pretty well, seeing that they are mine own family; and that the place where they live stands to me in the sacred relation of home. A quiet little Welsh village, an out-of-the-way retired nook, with nothing much to recommend it, save the beautiful sea, and the freshest of air, and the most quaint and rugged of scenery. That was all; and all that I wanted; so, for a time, good-bye to the smoky chimneys and whirring machinery, to the sturdy independence of the north, and its people—independence which, in the eyes of the benighted foreigner, might savour of unqualified boorishness—to the dirt and discomfort of a manufacturing town, and welcome the “angel’s visit,” a month’s holiday.

The very early morning,—beautiful as morning ever can be in smoky towns, ere the day’s work has well advanced,—found me at the half-awake station whence my journey “due south” was to commence. Before that journey should end many a “lee lang mile” must be run by the puffing monster to whose care I was entrusting myself—and many a county travelled through. Why need particularize the journey. There is a wonderful sameness in these railway journeys—excepting always the chance of a collision, which, though varying the monotony, can scarcely be styled pleasurable. Of course, there was the usual commercial traveller;—king of the road no more, ’tis true, but determined to be monarch absolute of the railway, acting as though the train were a special put on for his use and behoof, and rendering the unhappy porters’ existence a burthen unto them.

There was a being in a white tie, whom the wildest fancy could not have transmuted into a clergyman, bearing a suspicious family resemblance to the clan of Chadband, Stiggins, and the like. It was this man’s pleasure,—having ascertained that I belonged to the Establishment,—to enter at once into a violent tirade against the Church, and her priests, accusing us all of friendship with the Scarlet Woman, and ending his torrent of abuse with the equally truthful and astonishing statement, that every English clergyman



of any standing and talent, was of Dissenting origin; he then wiped his hot forehead, on which the perspiration stood like beads, and assumed a look of resigned triumph. I fancied that he would next invite me to join in prayer; but he merely contented himself with his victory. Astonishment had well-nigh reft me of my senses; I listened to the man's oratory with the helpless feeling of one in a night-mare, and, when he got out, and joined a damsel of the flock, I sighed with relief. And there were also in my carriage a couple of happy-looking bronzed schoolboys, from the great school of the north, Rossall, who during Boanerges' harangue sat staring open-eyed, but found their wits on his departure, and chattered about their cricket, and rifle-corps, and little school larks, with the most engaging frankness. And, "tell it not in Gath," one of the young monsters, seeing me light my faithful old meer-schaum, produced an enormous cheroot, and gravely proceeded to consume it, with the air of a man about town.

On we whirled out of the smoke-laden country with the stacks of chimneys "all dark and barren as a rainy sea," past Stockport, in all its gaunt ugliness, and other large towns, where hard uncompromising toil went its ceaseless round, till we reached Crewe, the rising railway centre; then, still southward, past waving fields of ripening wheat, over which the wind swept as it did in days of old, when it suggested to the Greek poets the comparison of corn-fields with the wind-swept ocean; past snug little villages hiding themselves shyly amongst lofty trees; past cool green reaches of meadow-land, where the lazy cattle took their *siesta* in the shade; past quiet graveyards where lay the cold, silent band of sleepers, and where solemn cedars were chanting an everlasting dirge; past little stations, where old-world porters tended their *parterres* of flowers; now in a deep cutting, on the brown sides of which grew the fair pink fox-glove side by side with the fragile wind-flower; till, at the hottest hour of noon, quaint old Shrewsbury, with its houses of age-stained brick, is reached, and time is allowed to rest and refresh the inner man.

Very noisy and jubilant is the old town to-day. Here is a scene which Rosa Bonheur could paint well: for the horse fair is in full swing, and the streets are filled with noisy dealers and plunging horses; and the College boys in their flannels are off to the playing-grounds,—and one enterprising youngster in gorgeous attire has embarked his fortune on a bicycle, and looks highly uncomfortable, and a trifle frightened, on his two-wheeled steed.

Once more our iron courser resumes his wild career, and we are flying through Shropshire, and into Brecon, as fast as steam can carry us. Every moment the scenery becomes bolder and more magnificent. The lordly Wrekin towers over the smaller

hills, and we catch a glimpse of that most beautiful little place, Church-Stretton, round which the hills literally "do stand." And now we have passed the border, and are rushing through Wales; "Llan" and "Pen" meeting us at every other station. A momentary halt at Llandrindod, where the station is crowded with visitors who have come to drink the waters of the Welsh well; stopped for some little time at Llandelo, where a mass of excursionists, all more or less drunk, are stowed away into our train; and at length Carmarthen is reached, and we are in the heart of Wales—with the curious-looking tall hat of Gwent on the women's heads, and real coracles on the river.

And, so the long wearisome journey was for the day over,—a journey so long that it reminded me of the story of the American, which is too good not to be told.—Travelling to London with his son, for whom he had taken a half-ticket, they reached the terminus very late; the porter thought fit to remonstrate with the Yankee on the size of his son—declaring that he was over age, and ought to be charged the full fare.

"Wal," ejaculated the latter, "he was little enough when we started; but you've been such a pesky long time on this yar journey that I guess *he is growed some.*"

The first thing to do on getting into Wales, is to order a Welsh mutton-chop, and,—ye unfortunate Englishmen who have been sickened at the sight of sheep as large as calves—how you would have revelled in the tender dark brown juicy little morsel which mine host at Carmarthen served up for me. It was one of the gastronomical eras of my life.

After dinner I "loafed" (pardon the vulgarity of the word, but no other is so expressive) about this first specimen of a Welsh town, to see what might be seen—truly as little as in any other hum-drum town in the kingdom. The "lions" were military chiefly; a monument to General Picton, that splendid old fighting man of the Fusiliers, who fell at Quatre-Bras, and a statue of one General Scott. In the church were hung the old colours of the Welsh Fusiliers, which had once blazed in the van of war, but now riddled by shot, and scarcely hanging to the staff, had found their last resting-place. Ah, me! it was a true commentary on the trite old Latin lines, "*Spes et præmia in ambiguo certa funera et luctus.*" "To this end shall we come."

A quiet resting-place after the fierce battle of life, either in the church, where the village children will sing anthems over our dust, or in the quiet churchyard where the trees shall whisper in the summer breeze.

A brave regiment though and a glorious those gallant Fusiliers; and wherever they met the foe, whether on that sultry June day,

when the fate of Europe was decided, or on the bloody steeps of the Alma, or in the early morning at Inkermann, or in the death-grapple in the Redan, the 23rd did their work.

Read Russell's account of the fight on the Alma, how that nine officers of the Welsh Fusiliers were killed on the field. "Watkin Wynn stretched on the ground in front of the trench, with a smile on his face. Colonel Chester, with a scornful frown and his sword clenched in the death-grasp. Monk, with the anger of battle fixed on every feature"—read this and the tale of the tattered colours will have been told.

And now, in process of my journey, I am getting near a place with which the public are certainly not unfamiliar—the scene of a humble little tragedy—of an act of utter cruelty and ignorance which will cast a stain on the Welsh character for some time. Finding myself at a place called Llandyssil—where I had to take coach for my destination—the thought flashed across my mind that somewhere about here, must have been the scene of the Welsh Fasting Girl's tragedy. On inquiry, the house was discovered to be some half-a-dozen miles from the station, and having time to spare I determined on a pilgrimage to the humble shrine.

It will hardly be necessary to call the facts of this case, which excited so much indignation, to my readers' remembrance, though by this time, all interest in it may have died out and the chief actors, the cruel parents, are working out their richly deserved sentence. It was the simple story of a child who was said to have lived without food for eighteen months. In process of time the sensitive Welsh temperament exalted this into a miracle, and the poor little victim, dressed out in flowers and ribbons, lay in state on her bed, reading out of devotional books, and exciting a deep interest in the people who came to visit her. And the parents, nothing loath, made a handsome sum out of people's gullibility. Unfortunately, however, for the miracle; and certainly for the poor child, a London physician more sceptical than his Welsh brethren, took the liberty of asserting that the whole thing was an imposture, that the girl was fed by some means or other, and that she was quite as able to walk as he was. And then the foolish attempt to extort money was turned into a dismal little tragedy enough. The parents solemnly averred that the child did not touch food; challenged the most careful scrutiny; and accordingly nurses were sent down from a London hospital and every precaution taken to make the watch perfect. As a natural consequence the poor little wretch, who must have had the most Spartan fortitude, was slowly *starved to death*; the parents, the nurses, and the surgeon looking on the while, as calmly as inquisitors might have looked on a burning heretic.



These are the plain facts, and wild as have been the theories raised by men, who have tried from feelings of common decency to condone the ignorant folly—to call it by no harsher name—of their fellow-countrymen, there can be no question, that a more heartless piece of cruelty was never perpetrated by man and woman; and while one regrets that the sentence of the court was not much heavier in the case of the parents, one also doubts whether the other actors in the tragedy should have gone unpunished. Reading the whole history of the trial through, there is one fact, an appalling fact enough, that cannot fail but strike us—the fact that in a place, not absolutely out of the bounds of civilization, near a large village with its church and chapels and schools, and where education was presumably afforded, a crime like this should have been permitted without any one stirring a finger to prevent it.

*Revenons.*—It was with no little interest that I started on my pilgrimage to Llather-Newadd, the scene of the tragedy. My charioteer, a delicious specimen of a Welsh lad, who coolly demanded a stupendous sum for the drive, and then consented to take exactly one quarter of it, amused me on the way with detailed accounts of the little girl's death.

"Iss indeed, Sir, and I was very sorry when Sarah Jacob did die!" (with the solemnity of a sober mute.)

"Doubtless," was my assent.

"Iss, Sir, I was drive the gentle-folks to see her, and I did lose many a guinea when she die."

My opinion of his sympathetic nature underwent a sudden change. Through very lovely country our drive proceeded, by giant hedgerows all a blush with the sweet wild rose and fragrant with honeysuckle; past pretty cottages where the sun-burnt children "lowted low" at sight of the stranger. Everything looked bright and fair, and one might have sung with Browning's "Pappa"—

"The hill-side's deer-pearled;

The lark's on the wing;

The snail's on the thorn;

God's in His heaven—

All's right with the world;"—

had not the recollection of that little girl's murder, and of man's stupid ignorance altered the refrain into—all is *not* right with the world; not right by half. Beguiling our way with much converse about the neighbourhood, pointing out a hill whereon once reigned a famed Welsh king—(of the fairies I presume,) my Jehu at last drew up at the entrance to a field, wherein was an ordinary one-storied farmhouse, thatched, and surrounded by pasture land. This was the Welsh Fasting Girl's home.

Luck was in my way that morning, for I found both the father and mother within. A more innocent looking, stupid specimen of a Welsh farmer, it was impossible to conceive than the father; he looked as if he did not half realize his position, that of a man on bail for manslaughter. But the mother—hers was a face that attracted while it repelled. Refined far above her station, with pale delicate features, and a watchful cat-like movement of eye and mouth, she looked like a woman capable of sitting down to calmly watch her child die of starvation. And she had evidently studied her *rôle* well, for seeing my tie and guessing my vocation she immediately sat down, and began to rock to and fro in the favourite Welsh fashion, sobbing as though her heart (her heart forsooth!) would break, and calling on her “Sarah fach anwyl,” her darling little Sarah! and assuring us that her daughter was in heaven—a fact of which I rather doubted *her* knowledge at any rate.

A cursory glance around the room, which was an ordinary earthen-floored one, half-full of cheese, revealed the press-bed, which had been more fatal than Procruste’s couch to the little victim. This, the father unfolded, and proceeded to illustrate to me (ably assisted by my learned friend, the boy, as interpreter,) how that a certain jar in falling had frightened his daughter to death. In a bookcase were displayed the various books which were part of the “properties” in the tragedy, and one Book notably, the lessons of which, if the actors had studied, they would perchance have acted differently. But little calculated as the place was to raise a smile, I could not help it when I saw on the wall right opposite the bed—a highly-coloured representation of Joseph’s Temptation, in the most suggestive, if not in the highest style of art! The mother having by this time exhausted her tears and prayers, I, not daring to go through the hideous mockery of condolence, bade the honest pair, “Good morning:” glad enough in my heart to be out of the room in which a human creature had been foully murdered—in the interest of science—and wondering slightly as to whether the “valorous Mr. Watkin” could not have employed his time more profitably in routing ignorance and cruelty out of the dark places of the Principality, than by trying to dis-establish her Church.

Any melancholy thoughts, though, which the unpleasant subject of my visit may have conjured up, were put to flight by the merry coach-ride, which for the next three hours I heartily enjoyed. After having tried all methods of travelling, I am fain to confess that nothing surpasses a ride behind four willing horses, through a beautiful and ever-varying country. There is a wild feeling of exhilaration, which throbs in the pulse and gladdens the heart, as the fresh air plays round the face, and it is then that the

mere physical luxury of living becomes most intense. Truly we may utter a monody, as pathetic as Burke's on Chivalry, over the decline and fall of the coaching days.

Of course this is the age of progress, and what contented our wonderfully slow-going grandfathers will not do for their improved posterity. Hundreds of miles must now be flown over in a single day. Journeys which took weeks in thinking over, and many days in accomplishing are now the work of as many hours. Bradshaw the perplexing is the prophet of a new age; but all this notwithstanding, the pleasure of travelling is fled. Whirled along in a dusty railway-train, the surrounding country, be it beautiful as Paradise, becomes a kaleidoscope, "mass of things, but nothing distinctly," mountain, and lake, and valley, all mixed in one. The object now is not to enjoy the journey, but to get to the journey's end; whereas, in the days of the much ridiculed stage-coach, the journey was a pleasure in itself. So much variety in the scenery, so much character in one's fellow-travellers, and plenty of time to study it in. Some such regretful thoughts as these flashed across me as the four horses stepped along gallantly, and the guard actually performed an *obligato* on the horn as we neared the town. For magnificent woodland scenery commend me to the road between Llandyssil and Cardigan. Tier upon tier of trees, one grand leafy mass, so grateful in its coolness and depth, so various in its tints. And then the bracken and fern which lovingly grew around the tree stems, and the star-like flowers, fox-glove, and wood-bine, and briony which gleamed out of the green under-wood like jewels. Ever and anon a vista opened in the wood, and showed us a fair glimpse of a broad champaign of meadow and corn-field, of snug farm-houses, and stately mansions, and pretty little road-side *cottages ornées*, where methought Love might live very comfortably; while the river, though much reduced by the drought, prattled over the stones, and sang a quiet tune to the listening woods.

Ah me! a lovely, peaceful scene, reminding one indeed that the world is full of beauty, like other worlds above, and if we did our duty it might be full of love.

But I have taken so much time over my journey that my reader's patience will be exhausted ere my holiday commences. Before long there was heard the far-off music of the sea—the anthem which Sea has been singing to Heaven since the first day. And on a sudden turn of the road, there it lay smiling before us, in the quiet of evening, the vast, the solemn ocean. That first sight of the sea, after long absence, can any one ever forget it? Well do I know the feeling with which the Ten Thousand, on their memorable retreat, as they defiled through the mountain passes and



came full in sight of that sea of history, the Mediterranean, burst out with the mighty shout *Θαλάττα, Θαλάττα*. Why try to talk in plain prose though of what has employed the master-minds of all time, from Homer, who loved and praised it, down to Byron's magnificent hymn; suffice it to say, that to me, tired of smoke and squalor, the fair ocean looked like a mother, welcoming me to her fostering arms, and saying, "Here is rest."

A beautiful little village was my elected holiday-place, so quiet, so old-fashioned, where the men were fishermen, and the women, honest, red-cheeked, kind-hearted Welshwomen, knitted the everlasting stocking, and attended to the children; a place where the appearance of visitors from the outer world was quite an event, and our appearance and dress, and every little detail, were scanned with a good-natured wonder. A voyage of exploration next day, after a most refreshing bathe in the delightful waters of the bay, amply repaid our exertions. The village itself, Abersaith, was in no wise remarkable for architectural pretensions, though the church which topped the neighbouring hill was neatness and simplicity itself. A narrow stream, or bay, forming a harbour for fishing-boats, divided the village into two parts—the east end, so to say, wherein were the fishermen's cottages, and the west, which, true to its fashionable character, boasted of two or three moderate sized houses. But it was in the coast scenery around that the beauty lay. I have seen and explored every inch of the wild scenery of Alderney, and the tamer coast of Guernsey, but for grandeur and height my little village and its surroundings beat both.

Awful chasms opening out suddenly from beneath one's very feet, where, full a hundred feet below, the water moaned and gurgled like an imprisoned demon; sheer precipices shelving down to silvery little bays, whereon the sea-nymphs might dance to their hearts' content, and where the tiny wavelets kissed the shore, caressingly, and made drowsy music all the summer day; clinging to the bare cliffs, or nestling in the crevices as the lissom Vivian may have nestled to old Grey Merlin's breast, were myriads of wild flowers, the sea-pink, and the deep blue flower so common in these places, and masses of purple heath, thrown like a kingly mantle on the stern cliffs' shoulders; caves too, wonderful fissures in the rock, where sea anemones of rare colours clustered in shoals and the sun-light could not penetrate, and in one of which, *sic fert fabula*, was imprisoned a sea-king's daughter, whose wailings are heard to this day. Then, lest Nature should be too still, flocks of sea-birds hovered about the tall cliffs, gulls quite tame and fearless of the sportsman's gun, while ever and anon a cormorant rose, splashing out of the water with a fish in its mouth.

And, better than all, there was the grand expanse of sea, stretching away for miles, whilst on the extreme horizon could be seen Snowdon, with its crown of snow amongst the clouds, the king of mountains, and Cader Idris, his viceroy.

Does the reader feel anxious to know how we amused ourselves in this village by the sea. In the first place, there was the morning dip, the ecstatic plunge into the cool green water, which made us even as giants in the way of appetite. Then there was fishing in the bay. My friend the curate, with whom I established a firm friendship, was the owner of a pretty little sailing-boat, which behaved beautifully in all kinds of weather, and her captain was in one respect a most worthy descendant of the apostles, in his piscatory propensities. Red gurnet there were in plenty and John Dory (the former a detestable fish to eat, the latter exquisite); mackarel, too, in the season, and herrings. Deep-sea fishing is sport for the gods, when there is just enough breeze to make the boat spin along, and the fish are in a taking mood; and when once the feeling which prompts a man to throw himself overboard by instalments is conquered, the pleasure and excitement are intense.

Then there was the quiet pipe on the beach in the evening, while we watched the fishing boats come in to their harbour, under the hill; or got into conversation with an "ancient mariner," who, in a mystic tongue, spun many a wondrous yarn, or prophesied tomorrow's weather. Many a curious scene have these sturdy old Nestors of the sea witnessed, and in many a bold smuggling venture have they taken part; they have spent hard lives, buffeted and tossed upon the stormy sea; often had they despaired in the wild tempest, did they not put their trust in One who walked the Galilean lake in time gone by, and said, "Peace be still."

And then, when the little hamlet was sunk in sleep, and the sea lying "calm as a child in dreamless slumber bound," while the moon looked benignly down, and listened to the sighing of the courtier waves, what a holy feeling of calm and rest stole over the mind, bidding the troubled heart be quiet! What a lesson of life to watch some gallant bark glide silently into the moon's silvery track, and then vanish into the darkness again, emblem of the changeful voyage which we must all make!

As to the people, our neighbours in the little place, my impressions of them were of the most favourable description, and I felt naturally inclined to take up the gauntlet for Wales and her people. It unfortunately happens that the writers who have treated of Wales have spoken without experience. Not to mention Borrow's "Wild Wales," in which the author has made the people out a species of noble savage, all the writers have failed from want of sympathy.

Now, that they are a peculiar people there is no doubt, but a people possessed of strong feelings, quiet sympathies, and an innate spirit of reverence. Welsh sailors, as a body, are the most religious class of men afloat, and I have heard these men talk naturally and unaffectedly about subjects which are frequently spoilt in the pulpit. Then your Welshman is patriotic and clan-nish to the last degree. He loves the old land of his fathers with a steady, enduring love; he thinks his native tongue the finest in the world, and he looks with exceeding reverence upon the old families of his country.

An amusing example of this was given me by a friend the other day. He was standing on the platform at Manchester, when, amidst the bustle of the train, up comes an unmistakable Welshman, and, pointing to a carriage, said:—

“Look, there’s Sir Watkin!”

Now, my friend, not having heard so much of the great chief, was somewhat astonished, and faintly protested. But my clansman was not to be shaken off.

“See, man, there’s Sir Watkin! indeed, you *must* see Sir Watkin;” and took him off *nolens volens*.

This, at any rate, is better than taking a shot at a landowner behind a hedge. Then there has been of late times a great outcry against the morality of Wales, especially amongst the labouring classes—the farm servants; and Mr. Tremenhere in his Report alludes jocosely to a custom which need not be particularized here, but which certainly is not calculated to further the interests of virtue. If compared, however, with the “gang” system in some parts of England, and with a similar custom in Scotland, Welsh morality will, I fancy, contrast favourably. Drunken the Welsh certainly are not as a class; they have no particular objection to the “cwrw da,” which enlivens the heart of man; and they do not care very much whether the whisky has paid duty or not—still they are not drunkards. During my holiday, I only saw one or two intoxicated persons, which, after the brutal scenes in our manufacturing towns, was a change indeed. The fact of the matter is, that Taffy gets a great deal of undeserved blame; and that many people are, with “ancient Pistol” ready to “muck a leek,” without having the faintest pretension to thorough knowledge of the people whose badge the savoury vegetable is.

The authoress of “Cometh up as a Flower,” in the last work which she has given to the public, has girded most savagely against the people amongst whom it is her lot to exist.

“Have you ever seen,” says she, “how drunk the masculine Cymri can be on market days, or what grievous old hags the feminine Cymri become towards their thirtieth year?” Of a surety,



our author's ignorance of the Welsh people is great; for not only are the masculine Cymri a remarkably sober steady class of people in the present day, but the feminine Cymri keep their colour, and good healthy complexion, far beyond thirty years—and a fresher looking woman it is impossible to conceive than a Welsh market-woman riding to town with her eggs and butter, in her quaint costume of tall hat, clean cap, small plaid shawl, and flannel dress.

And then the Welsh language is a deplorable tongue “which, we trust, will soon be among the abuses of the past.” Now although Master Thomas Ingoldsby makes exceedingly merry about the tongue in which “the a, and the e, the i, o, and the u, have really but little or nothing to do;” and although I believe that an attempt to pronounce some of the most uncompromising of the words—“Pwll y croch y crochan,” for example—would result in the instant strangulation of the adventurous Saxon who made the essay, yet who shall deny that the same Welsh language is not, in the mouth of an educated speaker, a most impressive, and in some cases an eminently musical tongue.

There are passages in the Church Service which cannot but strike the hearer with a sense of their grandeur and impressiveness. There are poems which charm your ear, just like a silvery little bit of Anacreon, and call up the sounds of Nature, the roll of the mighty deep heard from afar on a still day, the drowsy murmuring of the wind among the tree-tops, or the fierce wail of the wintry blast, as it rushes out to lash the waves into madness. But I must drop my gauntlet—it were worthy of the mad gentle-hearted old Don to waste one's time on such a deed of bootless chivalry as to try and defend a country ever hardly used; better to return once more to hard facts. One word here as to the state of the Church in Wales—a subject in which the present writer must be expected to take some interest.

Some few months ago, when Mr. Watkin brought out that motion which came to such an untimely end,—when he, in imitation of greater men, shrieked out his little “*Delenda est Carthago*”—the impression amongst English people seemed to be that the Welsh Church was in a very bad state indeed, that it literally cumbered the ground—held on to life by the frailest of all tenures, and was the “church of the rich few,” not of the majority of the people. That, to a certain extent, this view was a true one, it is impossible to deny; that the Welsh Church has seen evil days; that while in a parish the church boasted of but the squire and his servant, the chapels were filled with worshippers, and prospered, no one can fail to see, for from various reasons, Dissent has taken such a firm hold on the affections and the inner lives of the Welsh

people, that nothing but a miracle can dislodge it. Nor is it difficult to guess the reason why, when we imagine a parish in which the English-speaking people are in the smallest possible minority, and the parish priest so literally unable to talk to the Welsh people in their own tongue, that he makes mistakes which would be ludicrous, if they were not painful. Can it be wondered that the masses flock to a chapel where a Welshman skilled in all the mystery of the language is able to make their heart-strings vibrate like the strings of a harp to his pleading and invective?

The Church Service again, grand as it is, if merely read, lacks the great element which enslaves a Welshman's heart—music and warmth of tone. But that brighter days are in store for the Church in the Principality it is impossible to doubt; with the appointment of the first really Welsh bishop—Cymric to the backbone, a lover of his country—her people, her traditions, will commence a new era.

One scene from my little village, and I have done. The charitable reader will probably imagine that this scene is introduced to display one's power of description. Not a very original thing to tell of. A storm at sea. Very hardly. But it made such an impression on me, that I must needs paint it as it is now before my eyes.

For some days everything had foreboded rough weather. The ancient mariners on the sea-wall shook their "frosty hair," and hoped that no good ship would be taken unawares. Horrid angry murmurs seem to rise along the shore, as though the wind-demons were struggling to get free and wreak their will. It seemed as though that mighty Titan mother, whose portrait is so wondrously painted in "Shirley," were "prostrate on the great steps of her altar, praying for a fair night for mariners at sea, for lambs on moors, for unfledged birds in woods." But praying in vain. For of a sudden, with the speed of a mighty army rushing to the charge, the tempest which had been so long brooding on the deep, came marching on in its wrath, and like the peal that shall summon souls to their assize, the thunder rolled along the heavens, and "God help them all," whispered the rugged old sailors, their faces soft with pity. "There's six fishing boats out in the bay, and they'll never live this out."

Fiercer and fiercer grew the storm. The very maddest rout of the winds driving the waves against the iron-bound rocks, and sending the spray into our faces, as we eagerly scanned the sea for signs of the home-returning boats.

"Ah! see there," yelled the man on the look-out, holding with all his might and main to his dangerous watch-tower of rock.

“There they are!”

Instantly every eye was turned dim with excitement, and every heart of woman and child went forth to “the little fleet” which was fighting gallantly with wind and wave, but getting nearer and nearer. There was a vast stillness amongst the watching people. The awful excitement of waiting was too great for speech. The old men held their breath. The women shook with agony, but lost not hope,—as husbands and brothers battled for life on that awful sea. But all at once came a temporary lull. The force of the storm seemed to have spent itself for a moment, and in that short time the skilful boatmen used to the coast had run safely into the little harbour, and half-dead were brought on shore, and cried over, and kissed, and welcomed—as snatched from the jaws of death.

But worse was to come. The lull was only for a moment; it just lasted long enough to save the lives of those men and boys, when the wind again rose and burst into an awful hurricane. The roar of the waves as they buffeted the cliffs, was like a park of artillery. And ever and anon, between the gusts, one heard a dull, booming sound out at sea, like a muffled peal.

“God help us all!” said an old sailor, whose quick ear had caught the sound. “It is a signal of distress. Oh! the poor souls—the poor souls!”

And, as if in mockery, the storm raged with tenfold violence, till we were obliged to hold one by the other.

“Look there!”

And upon the crest of an enormous wave we saw, what I pray God I may never see again, a large vessel, alive with human beings, coming on slowly to her doom, and we unable to stir hand or foot, or offer the least help,—a terrible sight, as she came nearer and nearer; till we saw that she was a plaything for the cruel waves—all command over her being lost. It was sickening to see the confused welter “of mingled air, rain, and foam,” to hear the fierce, hungry scream of the blast and the waves, as they leaped like hounds on the rocks and the battle-shout of the beleaguering winds, and the dim, frothy line of breakers gleaming like the teeth of a wild beast, as they surrounded their prey.

And now the sea began to break clean over the vessel, and before our straining eyes, human beings were washed from their hold. I distinctly counted ten people clustered together amidships. One huge breaker—and then there were *only four*, then the number lessened to two, and a long pent-up wail of agony went through the crowd upon the cliff.

*Ay de me*, there was a woman on that deck who held her baby aloft. The mothers on shore saw it, and sobbed “*drian bach*,”



in their loving way ; and as she pressed her lips to a cross she wore, the waves made their final assault and their victim parted in two, and—there was an end.

She turned out to be a Portuguese trader, and many a relic was washed ashore, in the still calmness of the next day, when the sea sang soft dirges over the victims of its mad wrath. And saddest sight of all—there lay the mother on the shore, with the baby still clenched in the death-agony strong as Love in her arms, and round her neck the ebony cross. For many a day that scene never left my eyes, those sounds never faded out of my hearing. I felt even as one who had looked on idly, and seen fellow-creatures massacred—though nothing could have been done by the bravest, for in that raging, boiling sea, no life-boat could have lived for a moment.

And now I must end this “bald, disjointed chat.” I might have told how that a little village love comedy, “Helen and her Lovers,” *amantium iræ pax rursus bellum*, amused us : how that the good people of the neighbouring county town—such a quaint, quiet, dreamy place—showed us no small hospitality in their good-natured way ; but my article has been over-long already, and egotism has been indulged in to such an extent, that I can only say in conclusion, if you, my reader, wish to enjoy a pleasant holiday, to combine health with economy, and to study the manners of a curious people, by all means go to a fishing village in the Land of the Leek.

## GHISMONDE THE FAIR.\*

IN fair Salerno, hard by Napoli,  
 As wise in counsel as in prowess bold,  
 Yet proud withal, but not so proud as brave,  
 His grey hair whitening with the snows of years,  
 Tancredo reigned as Prince. His city shone  
 In arts conspicuous far above her peers ;  
 In physic, law, and sage theology.  
 But court nor life of state did Tancred keep ;  
 For, ere he reached the noontide of his life,  
 Fate had borne off the idol of his heart,  
 His partner in twelve years of wedded love,  
 And left him ruler o'er a widow'd hall.  
 But in her place there grew to womanhood  
 A daughter fair of form, Ghismunda named ;  
 And she would cheer the old man's heart and sing  
 The songs he loved to hear of war and chase ;  
 And she would play the cithern or the lute ;  
 And she would oft caress his hawk and hound  
 And courser gay ; and as she moved along  
 The people cried, " Behold the daughter fair  
 Of a fair mother, and as good as fair."

And years rolled on ; and she had won the heart,  
 The heart and hand of Capua's princely son :  
 But ere twelve months had waxed and waned again,  
 Her Lord lay stretch'd upon the battle-field,

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\* This story, as most of our readers are aware, is taken from Boccaccio's *Decameron* ; it has been versified by Dryden, and it formed the subject of a drama by Robert Wilmot, which was acted before Queen Elizabeth at the Inner Temple, in 1568, (see Dodsley's collection of Old Plays, vol. ii.) The substance of the story has been made familiar by a painting attributed to Corregio, in which Sigismunda is represented as weeping over the heart of her lover ; and the same subject was treated, though in a very different style, by Hogarth. The story has also been rendered into Latin prose by L. Aretine, into Latin Elegiac verse by Filippo Berzold, and also into Italian. It forms the subject of no less than five Italian tragedies, one of which " *La Ghismonda*," was at one time attributed, though falsely, to Torquato Tasso. Some liberties have been taken with the story in the present version.

And she had donned the weeds of widowhood ;  
 Then back returned unto her father's halls,  
 Though young in years yet childless.

So she mourn'd

In secret silence ; and she pined, and grew  
 Weary of life and life's sad desolateness.

Meantime Tancredo, shrinking from the gaze  
 Of his own people, lived an inner life,  
 Thoughtful, retired, much pondering on the past,  
 Yet more upon the future. He would spend  
 Long days in silence, and would muse alone  
 Upon his Castle terrace ; and he grew  
 Moody and speechless. And no friend drew near  
 To break Salerno's dull monotony.  
 But Ghismonde, she was young, and of young love  
 And love's delights had tasted ; and she pined  
 In weariness, unmated.

Now it chanced

One day she crossed the market-place afoot,  
 From mass returning or from vesper prayer ;  
 Dropp'd down from her fair neck a little cross,  
 And string of beads from off her rosary.

Haply Guiscardo, though he was the son  
 Of poor but honest parents, and his cheeks  
 And arms with daily labour were abronzed,  
 Stepp'd forth and picked the golden treasure up,  
 And handed it to Ghismonde with a bow  
 So graceful and so gentle that he smote  
 Her inmost heart, and stole her soul away.  
 Guiscardo she with kindly words dismissed,  
 And begged that he would come the morrow's noon  
 Unto the palace to receive a gift.  
 " No gift, my gracious lady, I desire ;  
 Your thanks are my reward."

He came and sang

A rural song such as the goatherds sing  
 By flowry Pæstum and on Silare's banks.  
 Ghismonde admired his rustic muse, but more  
 His bearing, noble, yet all rustic too ;  
 And most his stately figure, and his limbs  
 Lithe, supple, well-proportioned ; and she thought  
 Seldom was seen on noble face a smile  
 More comely and more truthful.



So to tell

The story briefly, 'twas the old, old tale  
That Eve to Adam told in Paradise,  
And that our parents to each other tell  
From that day to the present. Flesh and blood  
Was Ghismonde and no angel; and she burnt  
With no angelic fires. Her pulse throbbed quick,  
Her eye it glistened, and her fair cheek flushed.  
Guiscardo saw; and as no laggard pressed  
The soft advantage, nor was Ghismonde coy.  
And though no marriage knot the priest did tie,  
Yet love found out a stealthy secret way  
To vindicate his own.

Shaded by shrubs

Beside the Castle ran a terrace walk,  
Above a bower with tangled weeds o'ergrown  
And idle briars in rich profusion mix'd.  
Here haply Tancred in his youth had oft  
Sat late and early at the drinking bout;  
And far in th' inmost corner of the bower,  
A door brought 'neath the terrace to the steps  
And winding stair that to the chamber led  
Where Ghismonde tenanted her lonely couch.  
Love laughs at locksmiths, or it finds the key.  
So rarely at the midnight hour the moon  
Peer'd into Ghismonde's casement and beheld  
One only tenant of that chamber-room.  
And they were happy, those devoted ones,  
And reck'd not of the hours that flew betimes  
Too fast for lovers in their madden'd mood.

It chanced one summer morn, ere yet the sun  
Rose high in heaven, Tancredo early paced  
His battlements, and adown the terrace walk'd;  
When issuing forth from Ghismonde's chamber came  
Radiant with joy and smiling as the day  
Guiscardo's self.

"How now, and whence art thou?"

And whence thus early com'st thou here? Speak out.  
Methinks that secret chamber is fit place  
For thieves or robbers; and thou dost not seem  
Some weary, way-worn, foot-sore traveller.  
Hah! and the plume thou wearest scarce is fit  
For such as thee, for walkers of the night.

Nay, but it is Ghismonda's craft. I saw  
 Her fair hands work it, when but yester eve  
 She sat beside me. Surely ne'er did she  
 Bedeck thee thus. Speak, caitiff, or I swear  
 By heaven, this sword shall smite thee to the ground."

"Hold, sir, thy sword. Thy daughter, Ghismonde fair,  
 Gave me yestreen this plume; I prize it much,  
 For 'tis to me a sign of somewhat more.  
 I have her love, her very heart of hearts,  
 Faith, love is stronger, sir, than you or I."

"Out on thee, caitiff vile; what? shall I see  
 My house dishonoured and my princely name  
 In foul disgrace o'erwhelm'd, and tame stand by,  
 Nor smite to earth the doer of the wrong!"

"No wrong, good sir; your daughter sooth is fair,  
 And young and gracious, but she holds herself  
 Her own, not thine; she was of age to wed  
 Five summers since; she to herself belongs;  
 And if she love Guiscardo, this at least  
 Guiscardo boasts, he never sought her love,  
 Which proffered came, unbidden and unbought."

"'Tis well, thou diest not now; nor shall this sword  
 Reek with thy blood. Yet get thee from my sight;  
 For if again within these walls I see  
 Thy form unwelcome, then with many a prayer  
 Vainly thou'lt wish never thy foot had strayed  
 Within the precincts of my castle gates.  
 Begone, or quick prepare to meet thy doom."

\* \* \* \* \*

Now weeks rolled on, and rumour nois'd abroad  
 Brought to Tancredo's ear unwelcome news,  
 That Ghismonde, though no wife, would soon become  
 A mother, and bring foul disgrace upon  
 The princely line whose scutcheon and fair shield  
 Had ever spotless been imaginèd.  
 Then rose the wrath within him, and he spake:

"The man that hath this evil wrought shall die;  
 Tancredo's shield shall never know a stain:  
 Or, if a blot befall it, he that cast  
 That blot shall wipe it with his own heart's blood."

By this my sword Guiscardo, as I swore,  
 Shall ne'er die stricken ; but he dies forthwith,  
 Nor lives to see the son Ghismonda bears  
 Within her womb. Open the prison gate  
 And cast Guiscardo into dungeons deep ;  
 For e'er the third day's morn arise, he dies :  
 My trusty henchman's hands shall teach him thus  
 Folly to work amain. My word is law."

" Mercy, my father, be thou merciful,  
 Nay rather be thou just, not merciful,"  
 Ghismonda cried : " he is no caitiff base,  
 Guiscardo ; but my hope, my stay, my love.  
 I am but flesh and blood, and I am young ;  
 I did but yield myself to love's own law ;  
 And he is worthy of my love. 'Tis true  
 His is not noble by Salerno's rule,  
 And heralds count him not of noble blood ;  
 But he doth cherish a right noble heart,  
 Such heart as well deserves ennoblement ;  
 And if he be both honest and unblest  
 With this world's wealth, father, the blame is thine.  
 He shall not die ; my fate and his are one.  
 Or if, Guiscardo, death await thee, then  
 The same death on that self-same day awaits  
 Me too, thy daughter, and my unborn child.

" Nay, father, hear me, father, spare thy tears ;  
 Spare them, lest haply thou have need of tears  
 E'er many a sun hath risen : for thou wilt weep  
 Bereft of me thy child, thy daughter dear."

The third day came ; bearing a golden urn,  
 And in that urn a mangled bleeding heart,  
 Draw near a servant.

Ghismunde sat, nor spake  
 Or word of grief or overflow of love ;  
 But firm in her resolve she calmly said ;  
 " Wisely, Tancredo, in a golden cup  
 Thou didst enshrine this heart, for nought but gold  
 Were fit material to receive the gift.  
 I thank thee, father, for thy latest boon."

She said, and took a poison'd goblet down  
 From off the shelf, and quaff'd Tancredo's health ;



And with her tears thrice and again she laved  
The lov'd remembrance of Guiscardo's self.  
And thou art dead ! Yes, yet a little space,  
And I too follow thee, dear heart of hearts.  
Only one boon I crave at Tancred's hands.  
As join'd in life so too conjoined in death  
Let us twain lie beneath the grassy sod ;  
And on our tomb be written but the words :  
" Guiscardo and Ghismonda lie below ;  
Stranger, they lov'd not wisely, but too well."

\* \* \* \* \*

And Tancred mourn'd the deed that he had done,  
And fain would have unsaid the word of doom  
Which reft him of a daughter ; and he rais'd  
Above the grave which held their bodies twain  
A noble monument to tell the tale :  
And they who to Salerno's shrine shall come  
To distant ages shall the story hear  
How Guismonde and Guiscardo lov'd and died.

















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